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TALES

OF THE

MUNSTER FESTIVALS.

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OF THE

MUNSTER FESTIVALS

CONTAINING,

CARD DRAWING; THE HALF SIR;

AND

SUIL DHUV, THE COINER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"HOLLAND-TIDE, OR IRISH POPULAR TALES."

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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SUIL DHUV, THE COINER,

(CONTINUED.)

SUIL DHUV, THE COINER.

CHAPTER VI.

It has a strange, quick jar upon the ear,
That cocking of a pistol, when you know
A moment's space may bring its mouth to bear
Upon your person—two yards off—or so.

Byron.

The evening hung heavily on Kumba's hands. Notwithstanding the repeated disappointments which he had met with in the schemes devised by Spellacy, the alternative which he proposed to himself in case of rejecting this final one, was so little in accordance with his inclinations that he had almost determined on acceding to it, long before the hour of appointment came, and before he was even acquainted with its nature. He hurried over his solitary

evening meal—but when that was dispatched, he found that it in no wise accelerated the hour of meeting, which was yet distant. He read over the letter of his mistress's parent, which stipulated a term of probation that his impatient temper could never have endured—flung it aside—took down his violin—and accompanied it with some words which seemed melancholy enough to suit his own fortunes :—

I.

The sally-coop where once I strayed
Is faded now and lonely—
The echoes in the leafless glade
Wake to the waters only—
My early haunts are perished all,
My early friends departed—
And I sit in my native hall
Forlorn and broken-hearted.

II.

When last I lay beside that stream
I dreamt of fame and splendour,
And bliss was mingled with my dream,
Domestic, sweet, and tender—
Now I would give that fame and all,
Were this soft starlight gleaming
On my old friends in their old hall,
And I an infant dreaming.

The hour of appointment at length drew nigh, and he repaired to the Rath indicated by his companion, which was made remarkable by one of those table stones, or cromleachs—enormous tabular masses of rock supported on five or six pedestals of the same material,—great numbers of which are to be met with in various parts of Ireland, of Great Britain, and even on the continent—and which are supposed by some antiquaries to have served the purpose of altars in the celebration of the mystic rites of Odin, while the vulgar traditions of the country represent them as the rural dining-tables of the ancient gigantic colonists of the island.

He had not arrived many minutes before he was joined by Spellacy, who appeared to labour under some perplexity of mind as to the course which he should pursue.

"Mr. Kumba," he at length said, after much hesitation—"to be plain with you, if you should not choose to come into my plan, it

will put my life in your power, and that puzzles me a little."

Kumba stared on him in some surprise. "I am totally unable to conceive your meaning," said he, "but on that head—you may be assured that I am not base enough to avail myself of any information by which you may commit yourself."

"It is enough, Sir," said Spellacy. "Follow me, if you please."

They proceeded down the hillock, over a little rocky rivulet, into a small dark copse of stunted elms and hazels—through which an almost imperceptible pathway overgrown with brambles, prishoc-weed, and underwood, conducted them to the door of a small thatched building, having the appearance of a stable, and connected with a ruined smithy. Spellacy hastily pulled the string of the latch, and admitted his friend into a stable, which was occupied by four stout rough-coated horses, whose furniture hung against an uncast-wall

of mud and stone on the opposite side. The condition of the animals, and the comfortable air of the place in which they were accommodated, might, at a moment of lesser interest, have excited the surprise of Kumba, but he was now too completely overwhelmed even to exercise a distinct judgment on the very circumstance which absorbed all his attention. A small ladder leading through a narrow opening in the boarded ceiling to a loft overhead, was next disclosed by his companion, who now relinquished his hold and motioned Kumba to ascend.

"Stay!" cried the latter, at length, "whither are we going?"

"Hush! no words here—at laste, talk smaller than that, if you value our lives. Up, and ask no questions!"

"But——"

"Hush! Up, I say again!" Kumba yielded, and they ascended.

"Now, Mr. Robert!" said Spellacy, in a low

tone, "only act like a man for one half hour, and you're made. Do you know where you are?"

Kumba stared wildly around him. They stood in a space about four feet square, the rest of the loft being, to all appearance, blocked up with hay and straw, except on one side near the wall, where a fissure in the mass had been formed, apparently, by the gradual use made of the article for consumption in the lower apartment. To this narrow opening, Spellacy beckoned his friend, and seizing his hand, as he hung back in wondering hesitation, drew him into a long passage, dark, and becoming somewhat wider as they advanced. The first intimation the young farmer received of the nature of the place to which he was about to be introduced, was conveyed in a sound resembling the clink of small hammers faintly heard, and an occasional murmur of human voices, alternated by the creaking of some great machine, the working of which

caused a degree of tremulous insecurity in the floor beneath them. All, however, was hushed into a perfect stillness, the moment Spellacy applied his fingers to the latch of a small door, which yielded to the effort, and disclosed the interior of the apartment.

"*Chaishin a moch?*"* was grumbled by a hoarse voice from within.

"*Suil Dhuv!*"† exclaimed the companion of Kumba.

"*Gudhain ella?*"‡ asked the same voice.

Spellacy made no answer, but motioned Kumba with his hand to remain in the darkness, where he was, and passed into the room. This, with its inmates, was fully visible to the latter, whose already excited brain was filled with a thousand new visions of terror, as his eye wandered over the details of a scene, with which were associated even the horrors of his infant life, when the name of the blood-stained

* Who is there? † The dark-eyed.
‡ Is there any one else?

gang, on the threshold of whose lair he now stood, was used to quell the peevish querulousness of his childish heart—and make him cling with murmurs of dependent anxiety to the bosom of his fosterer.

A large fire, formed with a mixture of culm and heavy turf, supplied the principal portion of the light by which the inmates of the place were enabled to carry on their secret toil. Near the centre of the room, the farther end of which was almost completely enveloped in the evolutions of a black and sulphurous smoke, was an engine at work, the whitish and wavering light of the furnace revealing, in fitful alternations of brilliancy and gloom, the aged countenance of the artificer, a white-haired man, whose large glistening eyes, and hoary, straight locks presented a ghastly contrast to his smutted and wasted features. The effect of this figure on Kumba's heart, was such as might be occasioned by a sudden indication of life on the features of a mummy.

Around this person a number of figures were constantly flitting through the uncertain light, some young, some advanced in years—the countenances of all marked with a degree of sternness, which could not but be considered as the result of a habitual ferocity of temper—and which was rendered doubly forcible and repugnant in its effect, by the murk and dusky hue which the features had acquired from the thickened atmosphere around them. Kumba shrunk back involuntarily whenever any of their eyes happened to glance in his direction, although a moment's consideration might have satisfied him that he was perfectly sheltered from observation by the darkness in which he stood. The men were, for the most part uncoated, the sleeves of their coarse and blackened *bandle-linen* shirts being tucked up after the fashion of blacksmiths, about their shoulders—their harsh, brown chests half-exposed, and their hands employed with various tools, of the immediate use of which, the

unseen spectator was ignorant. Notwithstanding the anxiety, even approaching to terror, which made the heart of the latter knock fiercely against his ribs, as he gazed upon the scene—and although he deemed an introduction to this fearful circle of desperadoes, as little less than a death-warrant, he could not resist the emotions of that violent and unaccountable curiosity, which compels a man so strangely to neglect all other considerations, when weighed against the opportunity of its gratification, and which seems to increase precisely in proportion to the extent of the danger which it involves. Hearing Spellacy engaged in conversation with a number of persons at a little distance inside, and anxious, he thought not wherefore, to learn the purport of their conversation, he began to meditate a nearer approach. A heap of turf, gradually ascending to the very roof, and extending several feet into the room, appeared to afford the best means he could desire of accomplishing this

purpose. He crept cautiously up, trembling in all his limbs, as the action of his person seemed to menace the unstable pile of peat sods with a general downfal. In a few seconds he lay lengthwise, within a foot of the thatched roof, while the knot of confabulators was visible immediately beneath his eye. His friend Spellacy, whom he now surveyed with a new and fearful interest, since he became invested, by his own avowal, with all the terrible associations connected with the name of Suil Dhuv, the Coiner,—was standing in the centre of the group, one of whom was in the act of concluding a detail, which appeared to excite a feeling of displeasure and perplexity in the mind of their leader.

"And that's the way of it, just," the fellow continued, throwing up his hands in a hopeless way, "all at a stand for the wash to give 'em a colour. I rise out of it for a business entirely. I'll take a spade, like Jerry O'Gilvy, and work a *drass*, av I don't want to be starved, all out."

"Whist! you innocent!" said a fair-faced youth who stood near, and saw the black eyes of their leader kindle on the speaker.

"Och, 'iss—av I could wash over a guinea be tellen a fable or an ould story, I needn't go past *you*, I know.

"Where's Maney O'Neil's ingot?" asked Spellacy.

"O! what's that Suil Dhuv is talken of?" exclaimed a strange voice from a far corner—"Let Maney and his 'git alone, do ye—What could ye make of it in a wash, in comparison of what I make of it the way ye know ye'rselves? 'Tis Awney Farrel put that in ye'r heads, but he had best change his tone, the Dublin clea'-boy* that he is, av he has a mind to stay in my sarvice."

"Was Awney out to-day?" asked the old man near the engine.

"He was; and I heard a party coming to

* *Cleave* or basket-boy—in the service of the victuallers.

the door as I left the house, with Awney by their side," said Spellacy.

"Well, that's somethen any way. What road do they take? and how many of us is to be on their track? And how much o' the money do they look to have? Eh? That Awney is a smart lad. With his scrap o' Latin and his off-hand free an aisy way, he'd decave the airth."

"I'll arrange all those particulars, when I return to the inn," said Spellacy.

"Do then — and do somethen for uz at last — as you get uz to do uvury thing for you. — What gain had we by blowing out the brains of the ould dark Segur, only plasing you, bekays his relation in Garmany kicked——"

The sound of a heavy blow and a deep groan cut short this speech, to which Kumba was lending a terrified attention.

"Now, ruffian!" exclaimed Spellacy, "have *you* gained nothing? I have the use of my old

hand yet, eh?—Take him to the far end o' the room, one o' ye!"

The stunned and speechless wretch was instantly conveyed from the circle, and a deep silence followed. Kumba listened with renewed anxiety, although the quickness and boldness of this assertion of his authority by Spellacy conveyed an immediate sense of security to himself, which was only qualified by his awakened doubts as to the real character and intentions of the man.

"There's no occasion for ye to be looking at one another that way," said Spellacy, determinedly—"As I served him, so I'll serve every one of ye that dares to question the command you yourselves gave me, while there's a drop o' blood in this arm"—and he extended one, the rigid muscles of which worked like small cables, as he slowly clenched his fist while he spoke—"ye 'll mind my orders—and 'twill be better for ye. Isn't that calf done bleating yet?"

"He axes your pardon for forgetten himself?" said the fair-faced lad, in a soft and conciliating tone. The wounded man dissented, with a noise similar to that short thick bark which a mastiff gives in its sleep.

"I never make words with Suil Dhuv," said the old white-haired man near the engine, rising from his place—his limbs all shaking with the palsied impotence of age—and a horrible hyena convulsion, too frightful for laughter, mingling its hoarse and sudden peals with a fit of heavy coughing and wheezing, which seemed as though it would shatter him momently to pieces—"I never quarril wit him for clinchen a bizniz well—'tis—O—hugh—hugh! —this chest o' mine!—'tis the safest an the surest course by half—That was our word—hugh—hugh!—among the Rapparees of ould times—in my young—O this back o' mine!—hugh—hugh!—young days—when they used to be laughen at Strong John Macpharson*

* A notorious Irish robber.

for never passen a good squeeze—and he coom to the gallows be that same, too. I seen—hugh—hugh!—I seen him meself playen up Macpharson's tchune, an he goen to the tree—Ah, ha, John, thought I wit meself (butt I said nothen)—av you tuk the advice o' Redmond's lads, you'd be sporten on the highway still, instead o' bein' playen at your own funeral—hugh—hugh! O Misthur darlen Suil Dhuv! gi' me somethen for this cough o' mine!—Nothen—nothen—we used all to say to Shawn, like a taste o' blood for salen a matter up—I'm sixty-eight years now in the world, an I never seen a dead man mount a witness table yit.—Ah!—never trust one of 'em, Suil darlen, an you'll laugh at the law all your days—an the comfort ov it too, whin you're used to it—and—" here a fit of coughing seized the speaker, so violent and suffocating, that Kumba, whose whole attention had been fascinated and concentrated by this display of perfect depravity, imagined that the ruffian had

consummated his impieties in the patient ear of Heaven, and was about to be summoned to an instant and awful judgment.

"This culm-smoke that's killen me intirely," the fellow continued, taking his seat at the bottom of the very heap of turf, on which Kumba lay, and causing it to shake under him —"No! Suil Dhuv—folly my ways—As long as ever I live, I'll kill—Kill first, and rob after, is my word—and I'll stick to it—aye—always. —O my poor back, intirely!"

"Poor deceived wretch!" thought Kumba, an emotion of great pity mingling itself with all his horror—"Does this hoary villain, with the red guilt of a life of blood upon his soul —the arm of an angry God made bare above his head—this miserable creature, the strings of whose life appear to be all let down—with a frame whose least motion is almost sufficient to shake its structure to pieces—who sits there shaking and laughing and ready to fall bone after bone, already mouldering, into the grave

—does this ideot demon plan future scenes of murder for himself?—Poor deceived, unhappy wretch! This is horrible." And in an emotion of deep feeling, such as people of an enthusiastic temper and susceptible mind are liable to experience at witnessing any extraordinary novelty, either in the moral or physical world, he clasped his hands together, and felt his eyes fill, and his whole frame tremble with a wholesome and softening agitation.

Immediately, and by one of those startling bounds which Reason makes, when accidentally freed from the restraint that was imposed upon her by passion and convenience, she springs into her own free dominion, and mounts

——"with prosperous wing full summed,"

to her real station in the soul—ascending, not by the slow steps of inference and deduction, but piercing with one glance the mists which worldly interest have gathered around the

naked brightness of truth—dashing aside at a single effort the cobweb snares of her false sister sophistry, and trampling and hurling downward in her flight the loose and crumbling obstacles, among which she has been long imprisoned by selfish motive and human respect—in an instant—and by a transition as rapid—a perfect and illuminating change was worked in the soul of Kumba. While he gazed on the old man, the fearful and terrifying suggestion darted through his brain, that *his* was the close of a career commencing like his own. His heart froze within his bosom—and then burned—and grew cold again, while a sudden damp stood on his brow and limbs, and his eyes became rivetted and fixed in spite of himself on the hoary and palsied murderer—whom he began now to look on as a future self of himself—the doubler-goer of his age!—a spectre conjured back from the days to come, for the purpose of startling him, like another Hazael, with a reflection of

his future soul. He clasped his hands once more fearfully—and lost, in the intensity of his agitation, a part of the conversation which ensued. The first sound from beneath that again fixed his attention, was the mention of his own name, pronounced in a heated and passionate tone by Spellacy. The old man was replying, when Kumba's attention was aroused—

"O don't mind that, Suil Dhuv, 'tis like the dhrams o' whiskey. Let him get the taste of it wanst, an see av he won't long fur it agin. Twas the same way wit meself, jest—The first blood I uver tuk was that of a 'ittle mouseen that bit me finger in a mail-tub—Ah ha, fait my lad, siz I, an I not four year ould the same time, I'll ha' my rivinge o' you any way—an I caught him be the tail an I hung him over the blaze of a slip of bog-dale—and he screechen and I laughen an grinden me teeth as it might be this way—till he died, burnt in the blaze—and my father laughen, an houlden me mother,

that was for runnen and tairen the 'ittle cratur frum betune me fingirs." Here a renewed convulsion of coughing and laughter seized the wretch—"Then I used to slit the throats o' the chickens to save the maids the throuble —this way wit the scissar—and afther, I'd get one o' the pigs to give 'um a knock o' the hatchet whin the butcher would come to the house at Aisther or Chrismuss—an sometimes, may be, I'd *haugh** the stout cow fur him when she wouldn't stand steady—I wish *I* could stand steady, now, I know—O millia murther! and tis *I* that ought to say *that!*—How the butcher an all of 'em laughed the fusht time when I tuk the sharp edge, instid o' the broad back o' the hatchit—ha! ha!—Twas that first made 'em put the name o' Red Rody upon me —though it's White Rody wit me now, any way," he concluded, raising his long silver hair with a smile which had so much of melancholy in it, as to astonish Kumba with the

* Dividing with a knife the *tendon Achilles.*

conviction, that the hard and ungentle nature even of such a being as this, was not incapable of retaining amid the petrifaction of all its benevolent susceptibilities—a selfish softness and tenderness of feeling in its own regard.

"Paugh! What has all this to do wit the robben o' Lilly Byrne and her ——"

"Hush-sh-sh!" Spellacy hastily interrupted the speaker.

"For what? Eh?—Who's there? Are we betrayed? Ay—do! strike me agin an agin after that, if you have a mind, but I'll do my duty—Have you any body lissnen to us?"

The name of his mistress, pronounced in such ruffian fashion, occasioned such an agitation of rage and horror in Kumba's soul, that it was with difficulty he restrained himself from rushing into the midst of the group and hazarding every thing for an instant elucidation of the designs which were under debate. Chance did for him what prudence, however,

forbade his attempting. The old man, Rody, quickly rising from his seat at the base of the turfen heap, disturbed materially the already frail structure that sustained the listener.—A few sods fell—in the effort to prevent a further peril, Kumba shook the whole fabric and came tumbling headlong, amid the clatter of the falling fuel and the savage yells of the outrageous gang, who started back from the circle with exclamations of rage and terror:—

"*Therom a-shkien! Mauriga Spy!*"* shouted one, in a rapture of vengeance.

"*Rosth erdhai fier dhen thinna,*"† cried another, springing on the youth with a yell of ferocious anger.

"*Fauscai*—hugh! hugh!—*fauscai moch a nihin leshai press!*"‡ wheezed out Red Rody—all clamouring together in their vernacular

* Give me the knife.—Kill the Spy!

† Roast him behind the fire!

‡ Squeeze out his brains with the press.

idiom, in the sudden excitement of the moment.

"*Connidh-a-lauv! Esaun-dha sucur a dherom lath!*"* Spellacy suddenly shouted out, in accents that made the floor shake beneath them, while he placed himself in an attitude of determined resistance between the gang and his prostrate friend, over whom Red Rody had uplifted a short bar of iron, with a degree of strength which nothing less stimulating than the prospect of an immediate gratification of his ruling passion, could have struck into his palsied arm.

There was a pause—while the eyes of all were directed on their leader.

"Fools, dolts!" he at length exclaimed, his round, black eyes sparkling with a light which might have readily accounted to a stranger for the agnomen which had been conferred upon him—"a brass pin would make me lave him to ye, to let ye see what

* Hold your hand! Stop, I tell you!

ye'd get by ye'r mane suspicion of one that's a better friend than ye'rselves to ye!—An you, you graat baast, that nothing 'ill ever tache" —addressing the wounded man—" it's the dint o' the bare compassion that privints me maken a mash o' your head upon the floor. Get up, Mr. Kumba, an tell 'em who you are."

Kumba rose and gazed around him. The men slowly relaxed their attitudes of rigid passion, and old Rody, lowering his weapon, tottered with many discontented mutterings toward his ancient place, near the stamping press.—

" We meant no harm," said the wounded man—" but there's little admiration we shouldn't know a frind that coom that way, so droll, tumblen down ov a hape o' turf into the middle of us, all at wanst, out."

" May be," said Jerry, with a very soft sneer, " that's the way of intherducshins among the gintlemin, that we knows nothen about ?"

It was some moments before the young man

fully recollected himself. When he did so, all the consequences and difficulties of his situation came rushing swiftly upon his mind; and as he had already, in one rapid glance at the approaching possibilities, determined upon his course, the peril which they involved made his heart beat and tremble within him. He felt himself, nevertheless, amid all the gathering anxiety that began to creep within his bosom, more at liberty to debate and decide them, while he was yet in comparative safety —for there are, doubtless, many natures, while yet unformed and undecided, in which the elements of vigour and energy are loosely scattered, and which require the impulse of extremity itself to call them into confident action; as a vane, that flaps from point to point of the compass, while it is visited by feeble currents of air, will firmly fix and settle, when the black tempest is poured about it.

While Kumba thus remained, gazing upon the circle—and charged (to use a chemical

metaphor) with an intense and uncompromising purpose—his frame covered with the dew of anxiety, and trembling for itself, while the mind maintained that fearful and clear-sighted serenity which governed the tottering steps of the martyrs of the early faith—or that feeling which, to use a more familiar though less noble illustration, throws a degree of grace and dignity into the movements of the hopeless wretch who journeys to his fate at the summons of the injured spirit of justice—while he remained buoyed up, amid a tumult of agitating reflections, by this sudden firmness of resolution, the men with whom he was preparing his heart to endure a keen encounter of moral or physical strength, as the case might be (the latter evidently hopeless enough), recommenced their deliberation of the mysterious design of which Kumba had already received so terrifying a glimpse.

"'Tis a'most time for us to be starten, I'm thinken," said Jerry, withdrawing a heavy

cloth, and exposing a small pane, through which the dark red, level light of a sullen evening sun darted across the room, forming a singular contrast to the whitish, ghastly lustre of the furnace, as it struck in succession on the outlines of stern and smutted features, and fragments of scattered tools, tinging the white and eddying volumes of vapour with deep crimson, and losing itself in the dense gloom long before it could have struck the further wall of the apartment.

Spellacy glanced at Kumba before he replied. The look with which he was encountered by the latter, as fixed and resolute as his own, did not appear to please him.

"Mr. Kumba has no means o' goen," said he doubtingly.

"An there four able baasts under uz, an only three of uz goen wit him?"

"I forgot that. Go and saddle them, Jerry. Did you bring your arms, Mr. Kumba?"

"Just Providence! no——" the young man

exclaimed, suddenly thrusting one hand into his bosom, and clasping his brow with the other, while a pang of disappointment shot into his heart. The real cause of his regret was fortunately not understood by the hearers.

"Pho! don't mind that. I'll lend you a pair of the best feather-springs that ever said 'pop!' for touchen 'em. Put these in your houlsther." Kumba eagerly reached at the weapons, but almost gasped his renewed disappointment when the wounded man who had been narrowly watching his eyes, put the pistols down with his hand, and waved Kumba back.

"Easy!" he exclaimed; "fair an easy goes far in a day. We 'll know your maning first a' you please."

"Hold!" said Kumba, manning himself by a strong effort—"We must all clearly understand each other. What are your designs, and what do you expect from me? Speak, for I *must* know them!" The firmness with

which he spoke the last sentence, commanded for the first time an involuntary sentiment of respect, among the ruffians, over whom the spectacle of a roused-up virtue had not ceased to exercise an influence, akin to that which, as we are taught, the demons feel in the contemplation of divinity.

"Let me explain all to Mr. Kumba," said Spellacy, moving towards him, and about to lay his hand on the arm of the latter, who shrunk back as if he thought the touch would have blistered him.

"No *colloguen!*"* said a voice from behind.

Spellacy darted a rapid glance in the direction of the voice, but no lips moved there.

"No cott'nen in corners!" said another.

Again the black eyes of the coiner endeavoured to penetrate the darkness, but with no greater success. His blood seethed in its channels.

"Let uvery thing be abo' boord!" muttered

* Secret whispering.

a third voice. Suil Dhuv, who at once felt the danger of any compromise of dignity, made no further effort to discover the disaffected, but assuming a perfect indifference of manner, proceeded towards Kumba.

"Let it be as he says," said the latter, whose spirit fainted as the anxiety of a hope stole upon it—"Come, Spellacy, come to your own house and we'll speak of it there, and depend upon it, if the plan appears reasonable to me, I'll not be backward in———" He stopped the sentence and compressed his lips, as in turning his head aside he beheld Red Rody slipping the door-bolt into its place, and regarding him with a horrible side-long leer.

"A' then—hugh!—a' then wasn't it the little chicken he was?—'Coom to ye'r own house, Spellacy,' siz he—O thin the knowen boy he was!——hugh-hugh! 'If your plans be raiz'-nubble'—Gondoutha wisha!—ha—ha—ha!—

'If *ifs* an *ans*
Wor kittles an pans
Ther'd be small use fur the tinkers—'

Shasthone *if!*—You had your liberty wit the *ifs* before you coom here, masther, you 'll have to dale wit the *musts* now I 'm thinken—"

Kumba's heart once more sunk within him, but his despair was perfectly accomplished when he beheld Spellacy endeavouring to repress a smile at the incident. The hollowness of the ruffian's friendship at once rushed upon his understanding—and shewed him that he stood in this peril, solitary and unfriended, and even unfelt for.

" Coom—coom!" exclaimed the wounded man—" let the jintleman know what's wanten. Sur, av you plaze, we 're in want o' money, an we 're goen to look fur it at Drumscanlon. Bekays you know the ways o' the place, in regard o' being coorten the young lady there, of ould—we want you to try it wit us, and take Miss Lilly Byrne (an a lilly she is—an a darlen lilly, all over, sure)—fur your share o' the plunder—"

The gradually increasing passion which nerved, and expanded the figure of Kumba as he listened to this speech—and at length boiled within his heart, now burst forth with a degree of violence which made even the ruffian start and change colour. "Villain!" the young man broke out———but the torrent was checked in the very bound. The instinct of nature and habit suggested his course almost involuntarily to the man. He levelled a pistol at the head of the youth, and looked coldly and wonderingly in his eye. The latter remained in the attitude of the interrupted passion, gaping on his opponent, his limbs shaking audibly beneath him, his arms still extended, and his fists clenched, until a sudden change came over his person—The hot anger that filled him exuded in a cold and chilling sweat—a sickening sensation crept through his breast—a hard throbbing struck painfully through his brain—and mists floated before his eyes, through which the form of the

coiner, who still kept the weapon steadily presented, seemed by degrees to acquire a Satanic grandeur and indistinctness of outline. The youth relaxed his closed hands, and endeavoured, while he still stared like one spell-bound into the bore of the pistol—to catch at some support.

"Let us lose no time," said the man, making Kumba start, with a sudden gasp of fear, at the first sound of his voice. "Coom, Sir! Are you for us, or against us?"

"Spellacy! . . . . Spellacy!" . . . . muttered Kumba, in a low and listless tone. But Suil Dhuv did not answer him.

"Wance for all, I say, will you be wit uz?"

"I am alone! I am unarmed! I am betrayed!" —Kumba again murmured, in a tone so expressive of utter agony, that it touched the heart of Jerry.

"Murther, murther in Irish! O the poor lad!" he exclaimed; "let him think a little."

Again the query was repeated, and again

Kumba neglected to answer. The man vented an oath, and cocked the weapon. "Is it game you're maken?" he asked, fiercely.

"No . . . n—n—no!—I do not insult you . . . . I . . . . no . . . . Spellacy, hurry . . hurry! . . . . Stay! . . . . One moment!—Ah! Spellacy, is it all come to this?"

"Spellacy can't help you, Sir!"—said Suil Dhuv—"but you can help yourself."

"Choose betune a 'Yes,' and a 'No,' for that's all the arguing we'll hear from you."

A long silence ensued, while Kumba made an effort to take the election. He endeavoured to set his frame, and stand more erect—a short, panting terror—a swift glance at his past life—a sudden and gloomy fear—a doubtful prayer—and an instant and cheering resolution to make a last compensation by dying for the right—all glanced in rapid succession through his mind. When the question was repeated he set his teeth hard—and said through them, hoarsely but firmly, "Never!"

At the same instant a tall, ungainly, straggling figure darted between both, struck up the pistol—and fled into the darkness near the door. Kumba heard it open and shut.

"Why then, bad 'cess to you, Maney," exclaimed the coiner—"wait till——" Before the sentence was finished, Kumba, seeing his advantage, sprung upon the speaker, levelled him upon the earth with a despairing blow, and planting one foot upon his breast, wrenched the pistol from the unconscious fingers of his victim. He was in a posture of vigorous and vigilant resistance before one of his enemies had recovered from their astonishment. Setting one shoulder against the press, and bending his frame so as to concentrate all its strength and elasticity, he remained, glancing from face to face, and watching the motions of all with that exquisite instinct of vigilance, to which extremity awakens the senses. A vigorous struggle ensued. The coiners began to hem him closely round—and a few missiles

—sods of turf—pieces of loose iron, or timber, were flung at him from the darkness. The more dangerous missiles, however, fortunately, were not numerous—the peat-sods he scarcely felt, and the few blows he received from the heavier weapons, were not immediately or deeply injurious; and as none of the gang appeared inclined to tempt the first fire of his single weapon, he began almost to entertain hopes of being able to capitulate, when he heard somebody scrambling on the press over him, and saw Suil Dhuv's eyes glisten with approbation as he looked in that direction. In an instant he received a blow on the crown of the head, which made the room appear all wrapt in one red flame, and then as instantly enveloped in total gloom. His scull felt as if it were about to dissolve upon his shoulders. His arms dropt—his heart swung and fluttered in his bosom, and all was—darkness.

"Ha! ha! ha!" chuckled the white-haired ruffian, as he endeavoured to descend from his

hold—"I thought I hadn't lost the knack of it, yit. Quiet an aizy, he is now, isn't he, why?—He'll tell nobody now, only two sorts o' people—thim that axes him, an thim that doesn't. Gi' me a hand, Jerry—O this cough of mine!—hugh! hugh!—A cough—a coffin they say——Wipe the blood from his forehid, do ye, boys—an go about ye'r bizniz, file I stay an watch my lad!"

CHAPTER VII.

I am not now the blooming maid
That used to love the valley's shade;
My youth and hopes are quite decayed,
And all my joys are gone!—
Irish Ballad.

That which hath made them drunk, hath made *me* bold—
What hath quenched them—hath given *me* fire.
SHAKSPEARE.

REJOICED, at length, to breathe a purer atmosphere than that which has been suffocating us through the last chapter, we request the reader to return, for the last time, with us to the sleeper and his blue-eyed sentinel, in the parlour of the inn. The interest which

she had evinced for the old man, and which had excited so much astonishment in his mind, did not appear to subside after she had accomplished the object which she desired, and beheld him once more locked in the unconsciousness of a profound repose. She remained pacing softly and anxiously through the room, sometimes pressing her brow with her expanded palm, at others clasping and wringing her hands hard, but with a perfectly noiseless action—now starting and biting her thin lip, as the voices of Maney and the preacher in the kitchen made her dread the waking of her guest—now gazing fondly toward the old man's bed, while her large soft eyes became watery, and her wasted and yellow countenance changed and saddened under the influence of some melancholy associations, until she stretched her arms forth to their furthest limit, and her bosom heaved and panted with a longing tenderness—and then by a sudden transition, shuddering with horror,

gathering her hands fearfully to her bosom, and endeavouring by an impatient gesture to shake off the startling recollection, whatever it was, that had checked the flowing kindness. At another time, as she crept across the room, the valise of the Palatine caught her eye, and made her start and tremble so violently, that it seemed to require a powerful effort of self-command to prevent her renewing the wild cry of agony, with which she had before startled the household. She then, with a light, tiptoe movement, crept to the bed-side, seemed about to lift the dimity curtain, paused, clasped her hands, looked upward, and finally withdrew it, and gazed upon the sleeper.

"*His!*" she exclaimed, muttering, in a soft whisper, a link from the chain of her silent conference with her own heart—"*his!*——O if I could only by tears, and kneeling, and moistening the very dust about his feet obtain *his* that I wronged more cruelly than by saying a word of truth in his ear! O how softly, and

kindly, and warmly his words of anger and command fell upon my heart! I thought I was a child again, and that my own father stood before me—Where is *my* father now!—Ay, have you a father, you miserable dupe?—You robber's wife! you worse robber than the worst, you plunderer of the old man's peace! you thief of his rest and happiness!—and for what?—For——" here an uneasy motion of the sleeper alarmed her—She let the curtain fall, and taking her seat on a low chair near the bed, she commenced, in that low and murmuring melody of tone which Irish nurses use to lull the ear of infancy, and which scarcely exceeds in the extent of its compass or the variety of its intonation the drowsy rise and fall of the hum of summer-bees, a simple and plaintive air, the words of which, rude as they were, we will venture to transcribe.

I.

The mie-na-mallah* now is past,
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
And I must leave my home at last,
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
I look into my father's eyes,
I hear my mother's parting sighs—
A fool to pine for other ties—
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!

II.

This evening they must sit alone,
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
They 'll talk of me when I am gone,
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
Who now will cheer my weary sire,
When toil and care his heart shall tire?
My chair is empty by the fire!
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!

III.

How sunny looks my pleasant home!
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
Those flowers for me shall never bloom—
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
I seek new friends, and I am told,
That they are rich in lands and gold;
Ah! will they love me like the old?
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!

* Honeymoon.

IV.

Farewell! dear friends, we meet no more—
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!
My husband's horse is at the door;
O wirra sthru! O wirra-sthru!
Ah, love! ah, love! be kind to me;
For by this breaking heart you see,
How dearly I have purchased thee!
O wirra-sthru! O wirra-sthru!

As the singer paused on the last cadence of the air, the pathos and simplicity of which she rendered infinitely touching by the delicate management of a voice of great softness and tenderness of tone, a short-breathed sigh proceeding from some person near her, mingled with and checked it in the close. Raising her eyes, she beheld Suil Dhuv bending over her, his arms folded, and an expression on his features which might be indicative of mingled kindness and deliberation. Her thoughts instantly recurred to her guest, and with a movement of swift alarm she rose from her

seat, and endeavoured to lead him from the place.

', Stay, Sally!" he exclaimed, "I want to know about the——" but the woman stopped his speech, putting her finger on her lip, and pointing to the bed. The Coiner followed her.

"What are they?—where are they going?—and by what road?" were the first questions which he asked, when they had passed through the kitchen, where Shine was now slumbering by the fire, and gained the apartment in the farther end of the house.

"My love!—my own love!" said the woman, laying her hand on his arm, and pressing it affectionately—"we have been now four years married, living together, true to one another, in sickness, in want, in joy—(and we *had* our share of *that* too, Mark)—and in guilt—(and of *that* too, Mark, hadn't we?)—and——"

"Come! come!" said Spellacy, impatiently —"what preachment are we to have now?"

"I was only saying, Mark, that we had been now so long married, and I never—never once made you a request since the first day we wedded."

"And whose fault do you want to say that was?"

"My own, darling!" she said, laying her hands caressingly on his shoulders—"sure I know 'twas my own! But it won't be my fault any longer, for I have something to ask you for now at last."

"Well, what 's that to be?" the husband muttered, distrustingly.

"First tell me, darling, what you intend."

"Poh! the old plan always—To make sure o' the horses and the arms you know, and then the four of us to ride off to Drumscanlon, and do our business there—and be back so as to take these here upon their way.—'Twill be a brisk night's work," he added, looking into the air.

"You will not use violence?" she said falteringly, while she watched his eyes.

"Poh—no—no—no—to be sure," the fellow replied carelessly.

The negative was not satisfactory.

"Mark," said the woman, twining her arms close about his neck, and looking with an agony of entreaty in his face, "my request—my first and only one—is this—that you will spend this evening with me, and let those men depart in peace."

Suil Dhuv stared upon her.

"I charge you," she continued, raising her voice and assuming a more solemn tone, "harm them not! Lay not your finger on a hair of that old man's head, as you value your life! Do not brush the dust from his path! If you give him one evil eye—one bad wish—one ruffian thought—it were better for you, your nurse had strangled you upon her lap! Let the morning dawn see you as innocent of harm, thought or done, towards him, as the child that is unborn!"

"Why——Sally——!"

"Keep off your hand! You know me not!—I tell you, man, you know but little of me yet——Observe my words, or fear 'em!—Fear for your soul! or if that will not startle you, fear for your neck!—for as sure as that man's way is troubled—ay, if only by a pebble cast in it by your hand, you shall die the death of a dog!"

She was about to leave the room, as if conscious of her inability to sustain the commanding and energetic tone she had assumed in her fit of enthusiasm, when Suil Dhuv, at length, recovered from his astonishment, though not at all touched either by her tenderness or her menaces, seized her firmly by the arm—shut the door fast—and looking fixedly into her eyes, asked:—

"Who is this man?"

"No matter!" said the woman, avoiding his gaze and clearing the perspiration from her brow, "that is my request—grant or refuse it as you will."

The Coiner slowly relaxed his hold, while he remained gazing with an exertion of intense scrutiny on her changing and agitated features. She seemed to understand the action, though she dared not look at him, and this consciousness served only to increase her anxiety. A creeping, cold, malignant smile, at length, parted his hard lips, and glistened with a triumphant light in his eye. He let her hand fall, and walked in silence toward the door.

It was now *her* turn to interpose. "Hold! stay!" she exclaimed, "Is my request granted —O tell me what you intend!"

"You can be secret, Sally—so can I."—

"He is a friend of mine, Mark, isn't that enough?"

"Enough for what? Don't you know, there are some friends of yours that are worse than enemies to me."

The poor woman *did* know it very well, and so she told him by a mournful shake of the head.

"Well! well!" she said sullenly, "I will tell you something, presently—But leave me to think awhile."

"I am going to say a word to Awney Farrel—remain here until I come.—So you can talk, can you?" he added in soliloquy, as he left the house—"We'll see if Lilly Byrne won't fill your place a little more softly:—Not a better sport I'd wish, than to see you take up with the *mudhaun* that's lying, brained, abroad in the loft. And sure ye can do it, the two o' ye, and welcome. Can't ye?"

"There is one other chance," the woman said, after meditating alone for a moment on the course which she ought now to pursue. "One chance to save all! What if it fail!—Hate is as black and deadly in the old as in the young, and sometimes more so—He may refuse——What then? Avow all?—Ruin! death, and horror!—Stay! let me think—let me pause a moment—O for some friend! some kind adviser—some——Heaven!" she clasped

her hands and uplifted them, but again repressed the feeling, "No—no—it is my human agony that speaks, and Heaven, that calls for penitence, will not hear me for my own selfish interests—My hands are bloody too—had I forgotten that?"—And compressing her lips with a shocking stare of desolation, she walked to the door of the room, and beckoned the old Palatine, whose voice she heard in the next apartment, to enter.

"Do not hurt the poor child," he said, as the woman fiercely repelled the little boy, who attempted to force his way in with the old man. "I don't know why it is," he added, patting the little fellow on the head, and looking pensively in its open face, "but I like the boy. Here, my man, is a tester for you!—That's a hero! I've seen an eye like that child's somewhere, certainly."

The woman fell on her knees, and clasped the child to her bosom, with a burst of hysterical passion, kissing his neck, and suffering

her hair to fall in long, abandoned tresses over its back and shoulders.

"Strange creature!" thought the Palatine, "what a mixture of affection and unkindness! what a changeful suddenness of motive and feeling appear to be in all her actions!"

While he again caressed the boy, the woman rushed into the other room, dashed the tears from her eyes, and glancing quickly round, snatched, from the extended hand of Shine, a vessel of raw spirits, from which he was just about to replenish his tumbler of *punch*, and placing it to her lips, drained it to the very last; then tossing the vessel on the table, she re-entered the apartment, fortified with that dreadful energy, with which the royal murderess of Scotland, on another occasion, sought to invigorate the natural feebleness of her sex—and utterly regardless of the impression which she left on the mind of the gaping and astounded Shine, both with respect to her morality and her good breeding.

"Your name is Segur?" she said, after pausing a moment to collect herself. "Don't start—" she added, "it was *that* informed me," pointing to the valise which he held in his hand.

"That *is* my name, certainly," said the old man in some surprise.

"You are travelling to your native village—your cottage, near Court Mattress?"

"I am."

"By the Crag road?"

"Yes."

"Return the way you came, or take any road but that—There's danger in it."

The Palatine gave her a sharp, and very suspicious glance.

"I am well armed," said he.

The woman smiled. "If no road but that will serve your purpose, remain here to-night. —The heaven itself is bent against you,"—and she pointed through the window to a small black cloud that hung above the dilated disk of the parting sun.

"I am well provided in that respect also," said the old man; "but what dangers do you speak of?"

"The road is infested. Every body fears it in those times."

"O," said the Palatine, "if your counsel is only grounded on such a general suspicion, we won't say any more about it." And he turned away.

"Stay!" said the woman, detaining him, and casting her eyes on the earth. "You had———" a long pause——"there was—"

"You are ill, my good woman."

"Sir!"

"Shall I give you a chair. Sit down. What would you say to me?"

"This ague plagues me so.—One moment, Sir.—You had a friend, in care of your farm, an old blind man—Adam Segur? You are aware of his fate?"

"I am. He was murdered?" said the old man, eagerly.

The woman shivered in all her limbs. "He was—and—"

"My daughter? I see you know my family? What of her, my good woman?"

"O your daughter—your daughter is well—merry and well—I'll engage—very well and happy indeed, thanks be to Heaven."

"Thanks! humble, heart-felt thanks be to Heaven indeed!" the old man repeated with a devout emphasis, uncovering his head, and turning his moistened eyes upward. He was again painfully interrupted by a renewed passion of convulsive laughter from the woman.

"The night and the coming storm bring on my ague fit. You must not mind it. I suppose you are astonished at my acquaintance with your affairs, but I was an old neighbour, and a dear friend of your daughter's—but marriage severs fonder ties than ours.—We are but poor friends now."

The old man hesitated one moment before

he asked doubtingly.—" Were you at all in her confidence, then?"

" O—a little.—She was taken with a young man—so she was—at the same time."

" A villain! a low ruffian!" said the Palatine, clenching his fist, and using a passionate gesture.

" Never truer word you said in your life—so much I can tell you—and more than that may be."

" My Sarah—" the old man continued, in tremulous hesitation—" was always a good and dutiful child—and—"

" Don't be so sure o' that. Heaven bless your simple soul and body, I knew her better than you did a great deal—a *great* deal."

" She knew my wishes with respect to that young villain, and I'm sure she obeyed them."

" Are you indeed?—and why should you now? Had she no will of her own, do you think?" the woman said, with a rapid and angry petulance of tone, like that which some-

times precedes an access of delirium in sickness—" Was she only to be a little bit of a puppet in your hands—to pull her this way and that—and lock her up, or let her dance, just as you liked? Eh?—Sarah, do this—Sarah, do that.—And Sarah was to do it all!—Ha? She was no such fool, she thanks you—"

"You do not mean—"

"Or if she did—was she to be the only saint upon earth? Others disobeyed their parents—and was she to be the only good little slave in the world—Oh, ho!—Because she was *your* daughter, I suppose, she was to be as white as the snow!—Pride, my dear Sir—pride made the angels fall.—Think more humbly of your own. I had a father as well as she—ay, a good, kind father—and I disobeyed him.—I left him in his age—and destroyed his quiet—and I knew I was doing it when I did it, and I did it for all that.—But don't be frightened," she added hastily, ob-

serving the paleness of a sudden alarm whitening on the brow of the old man—"*She* was less guilty than I.—She was not such an abandoned, unhappy wretch as I am. Few *are*, indeed," she added, mournfully, tapping with her feet on the floor, like one in pain.

"I have been so long absent," said the Palatine—"that I have forgotten many things which, perhaps, some persons will say I ought to remember. You say you are an old neighbour, yet I cannot by any exertion recall your person or your name to my recollection."

"Can you remember a family of the name of Sparling, who lived within a few perches of the high road near your village?"

"Phil Sparling? I do, very well. His wife died in giving birth to an only daughter—"

"That's it, just!" said the woman, laying her hand quickly on his arm—"I'm that daughter—that's just it, now. I am, indeed. I'm that girl."

"And your father—"

"Listen—and I'll tell you every thing.—When Mark—no—no—when your daughter's sweetheart, Dinny, I think she called him, used to be coming about the cottage, Mark Spellacy here, my husband, used to be along with him, and while Sarah took *his* arm, and walked with him in the moonlight, I walked with Mark—leaving my old father that loved me, lonely in his house. Mark was poor and wanted money—and when we had agreed to go off together, unknown to the old man, I robbed him and gave it to Mark—so I did. —I did, indeed.—And I left my old father without so much as one—just one word for all his love, in the dead of night—and no one to care for him—without so much as a 'this' or 'that'—or 'by your leave, father'—or 'God be with you for your kindness.' Not a word, indeed—no more than if he was a stone—or *I*.—And I robbing him too, think o' that!—Did you ever hear o' such a lady? Did you now!—O my heart! My brain! Oh God,

vengeful, terrible God!—Oh hell! hell! 'tis with me, Sir—I have it—" And suffering her voice to fall suddenly from its shrilly and painful height to a low and hoarsely muttered sound of horror, as she repeated the last exclamation, she paused a moment, gazing with hot, dry, and distended eyeballs on the earth. The Palatine regarded her with great anxiety and commiseration.

" Poor creature!" he said, with tenderness—" so much feeling cannot be without some beneficial influence.—Why don't you return to your father?"

" *Me!*—me go near him!—Ah! no—I am not quite so bad as that, yet.—'Tis terrible enough to think of him—and think of him I do, enough. Many a long year it is now since I left him, and yet his voice sounds as plainly in my ears as if he were constantly about me. When I wake in the morning I hear him call my name—and when we sit down to our meals, I see his old hands closed, and hear his

holy, contented prayer—and think of all his fondness and his love—saying a thing from his heart, and seeming to make a joke of it.—No bragging love, like a young man's.—And sometimes too, in the dead of the winter night, when I lie alone in my bed, and the rain beats on the thatch—and the wind blows—and my first, frightful dreams come on, I see him then with his white, bony cheek, and his red and angry eyes—and his long gray hairs hanging down about his face, standing on the floor, and looking down towards me—upbraiding me with everything—'Sally, look at your father, how you have served him.—You have left his arms for a common robber's.—Ah, Sally, when I held you in my arms, a little child—when I kissed your cheek—and taught you to know the right from the wrong, I little thought you would make me such a return as this one day!'—And sometimes I see him in rags and poverty, and he bends over me with his cold blue lips, and presses his

hands down upon my throat till I gasp for breath, and screech out o' my sleep, and wake in the midst o' the darkness—the black, thick darkness—all about—about me—and I wave my hands through it—and that horrible pale face is there before me still." And with a chilly shuddering, she placed both hands on her face, and sunk back in her chair.

"Yet I would advise you to lose no time in returning to your father. You will at all events have done your duty by making the effort at reconciliation—and don't think so hardly of him as to suppose he will reject you, woman. If I judge by myself, he—no—" the old man paused, and shook his head.

"Well? well? Eh? what were you going to say?" asked the woman eagerly—"if you judged by yourself—what?"

"Nothing. I'm afraid I miscalculated."

The poor woman gave a deep sigh, and cast a disappointed look around her.

"But I have no cause to judge of others

by myself. I have discovered many symptoms of hardness and inveteracy about my own character, which I am sure belong not to all men."

"No matter. Tell me how you would act yourself—for that only could give me satisfaction."

The Palatine stared hard upon her.

"Ay—speak!" she continued, "place yourself in poor Sparling's situation. Suppose your daughter had served you, as I served my father—and suppose she was as sorry for it as the Almighty, that sees my heart, knows *I* am—and suppose she was to come to your door again, and stretch her hands out to you, and cry to you for forgiveness—Would you slap the door with a curse in her face—or would you think of the dead mother that bore her and that loved you dearly—and of the God that forgave, and commanded all to forgive—and take the poor, weeping, heart-broken creature to your heart again?—Would

you forgive her?—Would you bless her? Oh, you would, Sir—your heart would soften—your eyes would fill—you would think of old times—you would feel for her—you would weep with her—you would pardon her!" And flinging herself in a convulsion of tears and agitation at the old man's feet, she remained with her hair mingling with the very dust around them.

It would be difficult to give the reader a just idea of the change which this speech occasioned in the person and features of the old Palatine. Far from appearing affected by the grief of the wretched woman, an expression, first, of strong surprise—then of sickening terror—and lastly, of great dislike passed over them. He paused for a moment—like one who is struggling against the conviction of a dreadful truth—set his teeth—and fetched a hard breath before he raised her from the earth—then putting back her hair from her face with one hand while he grasped

her arm with the other, he looked long and amazedly into her eyes—both remaining fixed in the attitude, and affording for several minutes no further indication of life than could be discovered in an exquisitely fashioned group from the pale marble. At length, after suffering his eyes to wander over the whole person of the female, he drew a free breath, as if relieved from a dreadful apprehension, and letting her arm go, he said—

"I have looked over all your person, and am satisfied that you are not my daughter—but I'm afraid I'll find it hard to forgive you the shock you caused me.—Go along, you wicked woman, it was a shame for you!"

The poor woman could but sigh and weep, and cling entreatingly about him. Her perseverance appeared to increase his anger even to rage.

"Go along!" he repeated, shaking her off rudely—"Heaven forgive me! I never felt that it could be in my nature to use a woman

ill since I was the height o' that—but—go along! I could almost strike you for the horrible fright you gave me!—Poh! poh! I wont do it for all that—" he added softly, as the woman flung her arms wide as if to court the outrage—"but you're a shocking creature!" And he hurried out of the room, disengaging himself, ungently enough, from the imploring grasp of the miserable wretch, who tottered, muttering deliriously, and casting around her glances of utter desolation of spirit toward the chair.

"Come along, Mr. Shine!" said the old man impatiently—"I could not look in that woman's face again if it were to save my life!" And he hurried in his preparation to depart.

In a few minutes, the trampling of horses' feet outside the door announced to her the approaching departure of her guests. Looking through the window she beheld Maney O'Neil standing in his usual foolish attitude,

tapping his thighs with his long bony fingers, and gazing loosely about him. As soon as he caught her eyes, he winked, nodded, and elevated a coarse smith's file, at the same time tapping his foot knowingly with his finger. She beckoned him quickly toward her.

"I done it, I'll be bail, mistress," he said in a whisper. "If they go past the Crags, any way, call me an honest man, I give you free leave."

"Where's Suil Dhuv?" she asked anxiously.

"Aih? Suil Dhuv? O, he's gone—himself and the rest o' the lads."

"Gone!" she almost shrieked the word—"Impossible!"

"Aih?"

"He's not gone—he cannot be."

"O — iss, dear, he is, Ma'am."

"He has deceived me!" she said, retiring in great distress of soul from the window—"his blood be on his head!—Mr. Segur!" The

Palatine did not answer, but seemed to quicken his departure still more.

"You need not fear, Sir," she said, bitterly smiling as she opened the door and looked on him—"You have no more bad news to hear from me. You said you were armed, Sir!" she added, as he sullenly entered the apartment.

"I am, thank Heaven!" he said carelessly, still avoiding her eyes.

"Look to your pistols, Sir!" she said. The old man now stared openly again upon her.

On flinging back the pans, he started in real alarm to see both empty.—He hastily dashed the ramrod into the barrels. The charges had been drawn!

"Now examine your horses' feet," the woman added. "The shoes were good enough perhaps, but on these roads, the clenching of the sprigs is apt to wear faster than elsewhere."

The Palatine was affected even to trembling.

"You can get both these little mischiefs remedied at the other side of the hill," continued Mrs. Spellacy, "there is a forge there—And here is your ammunition," she added, handing him powder and ball from a corner cupboard. "This affair may, and most probably *will*, cost me my life," she said, mournfully—"but I do not care for that. All that I entreat is that you will not fire—oh—do not!—until you are compelled.—I have my reasons for this request."

Segur held out his hand in silence, and wrung hers with kindness and gratitude.

"Bless you! O God—God bless you for that act!" she exclaimed, kissing the hand with a burst of the first, generous, heart-easing tears she had shed for many a long day—"But go—hurry . . . . . hurry—!" she added, checking herself and rising hastily—"My blessings are not ominous of much good. Ride hard and fast—the night will be lost. Farewell, Sir! Since you will not stay, even to save blood."

The Palatine departed in silence.

"Now!" the woman exclaimed, after gazing with fixed and staring eyes upon the old man, until he disappeared together with his company behind the hill on the rear of the inn—"Now, Sarah, your time is come! Which of 'em is it to be? Eh, whose throat have you cut? *His* or your husband's? The father of your child—that loved—that trusted you—that tossed his life into your hands, as freely as he would his money into a strong box.—You have armed his worst enemy against him! Eh? you Dalilah you! what have you done? O great Heaven, was I mad? Come back! Ho, ho! old man, come back!—He's gone—he pretends he can't hear me, because he hates him deadly, and he wants to take his life with the two pistols that I loaded for him. Ho! ho! ho! bravely done, wife. You're a fine lady, arn't you? Indeed you are. O my boy, my child, my first and only darling!" she continued, clasping the terrified urchin wildly

to her bosom—"O my heart's light! my treasure!—Look at me! Do you know me? I'm your mother—And I sent that man, that gave you the tester, you know, I sent him to shoot your father! Wasn't I the fine mother to you? —Don't curse me, you young villain, or I'll dash your brains out! He was going to take the life of my friend, and I took his, that's all. Don't tell any body, darling. O my love, my sweet love—here! put your little head into my heart, and comfort it, for it is breaking, and burning, and leaping within me! That's it, my dove," and gathering the pale-faced little creature with a trembling tenderness, to her heart, she suffered the torrent of fierce passion to which she had abandoned herself, to die away in murmurs of mournful fondness and agitation.

Suddenly starting up, and throwing her long hair back from her ears, she remained in an attitude of intense attention. "Ha!—Was that a shot? No—not yet—sure. Stay, Dinny

—stand back, Sir. What am I to do, now? Hide your black eyes, child, I can't look at them. The young *suileen dhuv*. Look, the storm will soon begin now. Must I stay here all alone in the black night until one or either of them returns to me? My head would rive and burst. Stop, stop a moment! What if the storm should come on dreadfully, and the thunder, and lightning, and rain? and hinder his passage? He can't go past the Crag-road, if one shower more should moisten the earth, under the Carrig-ou-Dhiol. O send it——O Heaven, forgiving Heaven, look at me!" She flung herself on her knees, clasped and wrung her hands, as she looked upward in a rapture of despair—"look at me on my knees, and that's where you didn't see me for five years and more—for I dared not do it—but look at me now, praying to you to send down all your thunders, and your lightnings, and your floods of rain, and keep them two asunder, this dreadful night! Do it for your own glory, if not in

pity to them or me, for so sure as they meet, there will be blood spilt in your sight!—Red blood that will lie heavy on the shedder's soul! and leave, may be, an angel the less for your bright kingdom! Ha!—Is that my answer?" she exclaimed, starting from the earth, as a distant clattering of thunder sounded through the silent evening—"My heart does not tell me that my prayer is heard, as it used to do when I knelt in my father's house. My conscience is louder than the thunder, and it says, that I deserve no mercy! What am I to do—I can't stay here—to hear the clock tick, and the wind blow, while my brain is all one flame—I have it—I'll know all—Here, Maney, take care o' the child!" she exclaimed, as the tall fellow presented his awkward frame at the door—and dashing fiercely past him, she hurried along the path leading to the Coiner's retreat.

In the mean time, Mr. Segur, Shine, and the trotting guide, Awney Farrel, proceeded on

their way towards the forge, which Mrs. Spellacy had indicated, and where a new accident awaited them.

As they approached the building, from which the sound of clanking anvil and hammer proceeded, so as to give intimation of the premises being pre-occupied, Shine observed their guide start and use a gesture of alarm. The action instantly awakened the dormant suspicions of the preacher, who was not oblivious of the conversation on the brass coinage. Awney, however, did not suffer the emotion to remain visible in his countenance or manner longer than was absolutely necessary to establish its existence even for the moment, but carelessly turned his eyes from the door of the hovel.

It was a low, miserable looking shed, the rafters broken, and the blackened thatch falling in, in various places, so as to give free admission to the torrents of rain which were of frequent occurrence on this mountain district,

and kept the little undulations of the earthen floor constantly supplied with an abundance of the fluid. As the travellers drew nearer to the place, an elderly-looking, *dressy* sort of man, equipped at all points, to *an agony* of elegance, and standing (a coarse, ill-fashioned block of clumsy vulgarity) in the midst of a blaze of finery—looking like a black ragged cloud in a sunny sky—or a draught of muddy innkeeper's wine, in a gold tankard (traveller's fare)—presenting, as he crept out of the midst of a cloud of black smoke, which issued with him through the low battered door of the forge, the most apt illustration that could be desired of the hedge-school doggrel—

> "A man without learning, and wearing fine clothes,
> Is like a pig with a gold ring in his nose"—

such a being—leading after him a fine gelding, caparisoned in the finest style, and looking a great deal more worthy of those fine accoutrements than its master—such a being,

attired in a full, snow-white wig forming a frieze, of which a shining, jet-black, soft-furred hat of the best Limerick manufacture was the capital—a smart, flowered silk waistcoat, and fine green coat, with silver-hilted sword, and tight, plush breeches the shaft—and a pair of bright, shining, clocked silk stockings, with shoes, and gigantic silver buckles the pedestal —such a being, so fine—so vulgar—issued, like a meteor out of a bog, from the smoke and vapour of the miniature Ætna of this Munster Vulcan.

"That is very odd what you tell me," he exclaimed, in a long County Cork drawl, "but I'm sure it isn't true for you. I don't mean to doubt your word, but you can't say you have told me the truth. I know the rogue is in this neighbourhood, and I'll find him too, you may be sure."

"Where did your honour see him?" asked the smith, suspending his sledge-hammer in the hollow of his sooty arm, while he directed

his eyes to the newly-shod feet of the gelding. "Because if it be long sence, there's but a Flemish account o' the two o' them by this time."

"Hang the fellow, and his stupid eyes, they would have imposed upon a Jew, let alone a County Cork grazier—His ''gits,' as he called them! Wait till I get a vacancy at him. I'll *'git* him, so I will—Forty pounds, Sir!" he continued, turning round, in the communicativeness of passion, to Shine, who had just ridden up, and was beginning to listen with a cruel anxiety and interest to his complaints—"forty pounds the fellow cheated me of, for such trash as this!" holding out several ingots, on one of which a quantity of verdigris had collected, which, combining instantly, and by a vivid association of ideas, with Maney's memorable parting leer, shewed like a horrid spectre in the eyes of the preacher.

"Have you tried them, Sir?" he asked in a faint and failing voice, while big drops of per-

spiration began to sparkle, on his nose and forehead.

"Try 'em!" exclaimed the man of the white wig—"why, Sir—look!—" and with great agility he whipped a small bottle of aquafortis from his flapped pocket, uncorked it with his teeth, and poured a little on the metal. A sudden simmering, and then a dark steam arising, left no spell to raise the ghost of a doubt upon the quality of the ingot. "It 's not gold, I believe," said Mr. Shine, mournfully.

"Gold!" shouted he of the silver buckles—"Sir, 'tis not only brass, but bad brass!"

"The same goold that 's in the copper kettles," said the smith, grinning through his black lips.

"Who gave it—to—you?" asked the preacher, hesitatingly, his hand wandering fearfully about the pocket in which he had deposited his own treasure.

"Poh! poh! I'm ashamed to tell you—but

it was a long stupid fellow, with a story of an old abbey, and his landlord, and his royalty, and I don't know how much trash besides—One Maney O'Neil, the greatest rogue unhanged in Munster, and that 's a bold word."

Mr. Shine groaned audibly. He need not have blushed, however, at finding himself fooled by a man, who had, with the same tale, imposed upon men of rank and learning far superior to his.

"A fellow that travels about in company with a Dublin clea'-boy, named Awney Farrel," continued the complainant, "a sharp-faced young—ha!——" he paused as his eyes fell on the guide, who stood close at his elbow.

Instead of appearing at all disconcerted, Awney blinked invitingly with his eyes, tossed his head back, and beckoned the gentleman of the silver hilt to step aside with him. The latter followed in some brow-knitting suspicion and hesitation, which, however, began to

dissipate and brighten up under the influence of the information, whatever it was, that the guide was conveying to him with an infinite deal of gesture and grimace. They often looked and nodded their heads towards Shine, who remained fixed in an attitude of as much horror as so fat a man could assume—his globular hands clasped before him, his lips disparted, and his eyes staring heavily on the distance. After a little time the man of the plush breeches laid his finger along the side of his nose, protruding his brow and lips, as much as to say, "I understand you;" and Awney with one farewell wink bounded over the *ditch* at the road-side and disappeared, both Shine and Segur being too much occupied with their own thoughts to observe his desertion.

While the unhappy purchaser of the single ingot remained in a state of suspense which momently approached the verge of agony, the man of the clocked stockings beckoned to a

pair of myrmidons in the forge, who presently made their appearance at the door, with red, sulky eyes, and coarse, gray, trim-cut frieze body-coats buttoned on their stout, squat frames with horn taches, and suffering a gleam of red to appear at the breast, like the ominous streak in the dawn of a gray morn at the equinox. He of the soft-furred hat pointed towards Shine and clapped his own elbows to his sides, signifying to them what course they should adopt, adding some farther hints concerning his amazing strength and agility, which were not lost upon the hearers.

The preacher was just in the act of heaving a profound sigh, when his arms were suddenly pinioned down, one man knocking off his hat, another throwing a small bag, or *Johny Doe*, such as the carmen feed their horses in, over his head, and drawing the running string about his neck, while a third ran with a piece of jack-line two or three swift circuits about him, as the hound does about a buffalo at bay,

belaying the tether finally in the angle (the only angle that could be found in the preacher's whole person) of his elbow. This done in less time than one might take in supposing it, the man of the wig leisurely tripped up his heels, and laid the poor culprit, as they do a huge turtle, on "the broad of his back," on the road, where he remained helpless and too utterly overwhelmed with astonishment to give vent even to a remonstratory groan. In fact, the whole affair was over before one thought could have displaced another in his mind.

"Now for it! The fox is bagged!" shouted the *buck* (for such the grazier was allowed to be)—"Ah, ha! I thought so!" as he drew from the pocket of the prostrate, passive, vanquished hero, the ingot, the fatal ingot which was destined to be a still dearer purchase to the buyer than it had already proved.

"Is it brass?" exclaimed the latter, half-

stifled by the bag in which his head was immersed, and yet anxiously alive to the investigation which was going forward.

"Indeed, then, it *is* brass, and *you're* brass, and bold brass that asks the question," returned he of the green coat. "No use in your talking, Sir," he said in answer to the remonstrances of Segur, who made an effort at the liberation of his companion, not being aware that the fine grazier was one of those blockheads who think it manly and becoming to be obstinate, and cling to a misconception with the same sort of fatherly kindness which would induce them to stand by an ugly son in a scrape—"No use in your talking, I have taken the man *in flagrante delicto*—with the goods upon him—and my prisoner he shall remain for this night at least—However, at your desire, as you profess a knowledge of his person, I will remove the blind from his eyes; and if you think you can be of service to him, I am going to spend the night at the house of my

niece Miss Lilly Byrne, of Drumscanlon, on the Crag Road."

"We are travelling the same way, at all events," said Segur, "so I shall say no more on the subject until we arrive at the means of convincing you of this man's respectability. How he has chanced upon that ingot, I cannot conceive."

We 'll explain all at Lilly's table, at supper," said the man of the buckles, merrily, as they rode off (repaired at all points) together.

"At supper, iñagh? An unaisy supper ye 'll have of it, I 'm thinken," said the smith, shaking his head, and slowly re-entering the forge, "That's a bad matter for Suil Dhuv, whoever told the travellers about the shoes—the odds are against him now, any way."

CHAPTER VIII.

> See how the pangs of death do make him grin.
> ——If thou thinkest on heaven's grace,
> Hold up thy hand—make signal of thy hope—
> He dies and makes no sign!
>
> *King Henry VI.*

The dinging of hammers, the creaking of stamping-presses, the rasping of files, and the low murmuring of human voices were the first sounds that assailed the ears of poor Kumba on his recovery from the stupor into which he had been cast by the practised hand of Red Rody. He opened his eyes, and gazed, still in a state of unconsciousness, upon the involutions of the dense culm smoke that floated above him, and which, partially illumined as it was at intervals by the flickering blaze of the fur-

nace, brought to his reviving imagination a thousand vague and wandering images that almost unconsciously referred themselves to his accident—a fatal termination, and an awakening in the centre of the new and fearful world to which his last terrified thoughts had been hurried, even in the agitation of the struggle itself. The illusion was not dissipated by the vision of the white-haired murderer, Rody, who tottered towards him, and remained for a few seconds gazing down upon him with as much steadiness as his palsy would suffer him to assume, and smiling through his chipped and bloodless lips, as the young man, from an instinct of apprehension, checked the returning symptoms of animation, and suffered the half-raised lids once more to close over his eye-balls.

"What would you do if you done for him, Rody, eroo?" asked a soft voice at the farther end of the room, the tones of which brought a pleasing association into Kumba's mind, as

they resembled those which had pleaded for him in the fray with the Coiners.

"O—hugh!—Oh, there's many a bit and a sup between him and the undhertaker yit," said the old coiner. "I don't know what I'll do here, watchen, Jerry—I wisht you went to the cup-boord an brought us the makens of a jug o' punch—Ah—Jerry—Jerry—ould times—ould times for ever! Get us the dhew till we drink Redmond O'Hanlon in a big boomper. I saw him a week before he was shot in the barn—an lashens o' *keogh* we had together, the two of us—'*As I was*—' hugh! hugh! hugh! —Eyeh! the voice is gone wit me now, Jerry, an yet I used to sing wanst of a time——only this cough—and my back—O!——

'As I was sitten in my room,
All in the merry merry moonth o' June—
I heerd a throosh sing in a bush,
An the song he sung was the Jug o' Poonch!
Fal law raw li!
Tol di rum day!
Tol fal ti ridum! Dum fileum tay!'

Hugh! hugh! I'm afeerd o' waken the dacint lad here near me—How nate I could slip the windpipe now just where he lies, so quite an easy—Aih, Jerry! look!—jest as they does the sheep—I'd give you lave to hang me to that rafter, av he ever gave as mooch as a groan after it—Have you the poonch ready yit?—Give it here!—Hould my arm! O this shake! Isn't it droll I usn't uvur to have this cough and shake whin I was in the Small County, and wit the lads formerly?"

"How long is that ago now, Rody?" asked Jerry.

"Why thin, 'tis as good as thirty years, or from that to forty, and better, may be," the other answered musingly.

"An inch in a man's nose is a graat dale for all, Rody!" Jerry returned drily; "but still, it is a droll thing that a man should have more ailments an things at sixty-eight than he had forty years before."

"Noan o' your funnen, you young colleen,* you!—We can't expect to live always, and though I abn't seventy yet, I know I must die soom time or another—'Tisn't age that always kills people, Jerry—and a man has no more a lase of his life at seventy than he has at a hoondred—'Ye jovial'—Gi' me the poonch!—hugh! hugh!

'Ye jovial fellows that pass by,
Av ye don't b'lieve it—step in an thry!
Step in an thry and nuvur flinch
To dip your nose in the jug o' Poonch!
Fal law raw li!
Tol di rum day!
Tol fal ti ridum! Dum fileum tay!'

"No, Jerry—" he continued, after elevating the fiery liquid to his lips and swallowing a prodigious draught—"I know I'm to have my day as well as another, and I mane to prepare for it too, and that's more than you thought, I b'lieve.

* Little girl.

'Whin I am dead, an in my grave,
No costly monimint will I *haive*—
But let my grave be short an sweet,
With a jug o' Poonch ot my head an feet!
Fal law raw li!
Tol di rum day!
Tol fal ti ridum! Dum fileum tay!'—

"I'll wait, Jerry, till I'm just seventy—an thin I'll turn over a new lafe, an be quit o' these doens.—I'll go to my Aister duty—an I'll give three tinpinnies to the priest, an a tinpinny to the clark, an a pair o' mould candles for the alther—and I'll have my bottle o' holy water—and my bades—and I'll make my rounds at Tubbermuirra Well at Candlemas, and I'll get my ashes ov an Ash Wensday, an my bit o' palm ov a Palm Sunday, an my little coal ov an Aister Saturday an my block at Chrissmass, an I'll do like the Christhens for the rest o' my days—seeing would I do soomthen for the poor sowl agin she goes, be the dint o' pinince—that's what I'll do—an I'll rise out o' ye, an ye'r coinen an murderen, all out, that's what I will."

"E' then, Rody, since that's what you're after, what should ail you that you wouldn't take a short stick in your hand, and be off at once—slap!—like cock shot agin a barn door."

"Poh! didn't I say whin I was seventy all out? Tisn't far from me now, and—"

The interlocutors were cut short in their conference by a tapping at the little door. The word passed, and was answered by a female voice.

"'Tis the missiz herself!" said Jerry in amaze, as he opened the door.

The woman rushed into the room nearly in the same state of agitation as that in which she left the inn. Her hair, now perfectly dishevelled and dabbled in rain, hung loose upon her shoulders—her brow was torn by the briars, and stained with blood—her limbs shaking, and her large eyes wandering in eager scrutiny over every object that was presented to them—as she rapidly hurried from place to place—

"Where's—ha!—Jerry—No—not you—Who's this? Rody—ha! bloodsucker!—stand aside.—Who's this?"

"Hush! Hush!" both pointed to Kumba, and made signs to the woman to be silent.

"Who? Mr. Kumba?—What, why is he not gone?—Ha! blood too!—O, I see it:—Up! up! Sir—up!—You are betrayed and laughed at.—Up, and come with me!"

"Jerry, darlen, shet the doore—lock it, an gi' me the kay!" coughed out Red Rody.

"Jerry, leave that door open until Mr. Kumba and I have passed through, if you value your neck," said the woman fiercely.

"'Deed, Ma'am, av I'm a *bloodsucker* I'll do my duty—I have an old knack that way," said Rody, sulkily, hobbling toward the door.

"Bloodsucker, that you are (and it is a riddle to me that you should be stung by another giving you a name that is your own boast)—stand from the door. Do you know me?"

"I know your husband better," growle the ruffian.

"Then, mind me—if you fear his anger, obey me."

"I don't know what rilashun they have at all, wan to another, your commands and his anger," muttered the palsied wretch, placing his back to the door, and examining the lock of a large horse pistol.

"If you will not release this gentleman, Suil Dhuv shall never see my face again."

"O thin, who knows whether that's what would bring his anger upon us?" the old fellow said, chuckling.

"Ha!—" exclaimed the woman—"I thought it! I knew it!" and she slapped her hands together like one who had suddenly solved an agonizing doubt.—"I'm sold—and his friend is betrayed.—Thank you, husband! I've caught you, Sir.—Up, up, Mr. Kumba.—Right yourself, Sir, if you're a man.—There's your enemy!" she clapped the startled youth

upon the shoulder, and pointed to Red Rody, who maintained his defensive position.

Kumba, whose disgust had been at first strongly excited by the approach of his false friend's wife, was not sufficiently disabled by the effects of the blow he had received to prevent his gathering from the conversation a perfect knowledge of his situation, and of the motives of the Suil Dhuv. The one fired—the other strengthened him. He looked first at Jerry, who stood irresolute, and apparently disposed to neutrality, in the corner; and having satisfied himself that there was no determined opposition to be apprehended from that quarter—he waved his hand to Rody to stand aside: the other, influenced by his natural or acquired habits of violence—and stimulated still more highly by the potations in which he had been indulging—refused to obey, and elevated the pistol with a menacing look.

Without bestowing a more serious thought on the chances of a struggle than he would

have experienced before whipping a cur from his path, Kumba darted on the old man, caught him by the breast, and sent him spinning round against the press. There was a report of a pistol—a sudden hurrying together of several figures—a scream—a hoarse curse—a crashing of bolts and stamping of many feet—and the place was clear of all but the fair-faced Jerry and the old man, whom he upheld apparently with an effort from the floor.

"'Twas Heaven did it, and not the gentleman!" said Jerry—"how do you feel yourself, Rody, a gra?"

"Aih? O poorly—wisha, poorly enough, Jerry, thanky."

"It's late for the pinince now I 'm afeerd, Rody?"

"Wisha, I 'm afeerd so—I ab'nt very well—I ab'nt meself at all, rightly."

"No wondher, sure. There 's a hole in your neck here as big as a button. How coom you to handle the pistil so awkward, Rody?"

"Wisha, I dun know. It went off betune my fingers someway, very foolish. Hould me up a little!—There 's a great wakeness comen upon me all ov a hape, intirely."

"Don't say so, Rody, eroo—Will I run for the priest?"

"Aih? . . . priest?—O!—Eh, Jerry eroo! what 's that in the dark?"

"Where, eroo?"

"Look, a gra! Look at Tim Henessy! Look at him shaken his head at me!"

"Tim Henessy, iñagh? Erra, is it the man you murthered that would be there?" said Jerry, in a tone of remonstratory astonishment,

"Not Guilty, my lord and gintlemin—twasn't I did it—Was it, Jerry! Aih, O stand betune uz, Jerry, *alanuv!* . . . It 's no use—for here 's Micky Keys at the other side o' me, grinnen down at me!"

"Well, that 's the crackedest thing ever I heerd, Rody. Didn't you shoot him stone dead with your own hand, and now to be sayen

he 's there grinnen. He has soomthen else to do besides maken faces."

"Would you have a loand o' the whiskey bottle you'd give us, Jerry? Stay! Aisy a while!—O, the pain—the pain, intirely, you see —that 's what 's killen me. I 'm getting very could, Jerry—'Tis freezen agin I believe."

"Freezen!" shouted Jerry, "d' ye hear what he calls the finest, soft, moist evenen that?—Eh why Rody—Rody, I say agin! what 's the matter? Rody! Stir up, man—He 's dyen, I b'lieve—O murder entirely—he 's goen!—he 's stiff'nen!"

He paused and gazed on the dying wretch, who remained in his arms gasping for breath, while he stared fearfully on the broad black darkness above him, which his memory, now for the first time startled from her sleep of indifference by the baying of the hell-hound Conscience, had peopled with the shadows of his many victims. He shrunk back, shivered, dropt his jaws, which clattered like a pair of

castanets,—his lips became dragged and livid —his teeth set—and he lay stark and cold in the arms of the terrified accomplice of his crimes, and witness of his blasphemies, a horrible spectacle of the sudden vengeance of a long-suffering but wakeful Providence.

The black speck which the coiner's wife had indicated in the red evening sunlight, was now a broad mass of vapour, darkening the region of the tempests from one point of the horizon to the other, and presenting, in the swift gradations of its progress from insignificance to grandeur, a magnificent and terrific emblem of the spreading dominion of crime in the human soul—from the slight neglect of a wandering thought in devotion to the awful and tumultuous blackness of impenitent despair itself. The first thin sheeted flashes of a reddish lightning had begun to quiver and play on the gloomy expanse, revealing at fitful

intervals the jags and unevennesses of the otherwise undistinguishable fragments of vapour in a thousand fantastical images. Our travellers, who had advanced little more than a mile from the inn before these changes began to make themselves visible, looked upon them with no little anxiety—originating however in very different conditions of feeling and situation. The old Palatine, whose determination to proceed appeared to increase in proportion to the obstacles which amassed on his route, and the arguments which were employed to dissuade him, observed a profound silence; and, except by an impatient glance or gesture which he used on every trifling pause made by his companions, seemed almost unconscious of their presence. Mr. Shine, whose spirits had not yet recovered the shock which the discovery of Maney's cheat had occasioned him, remained pinioned on his poney, riding between both the "*robineen-redbreasts*," as the gentleman of the wig and buckles termed his myr-

midons—the little canvas-bag, or John Doe, hanging down over his back in the fashion of a hood, and fully prepared, in case of any attempt to recover his liberty, of which the Cork grazier appeared singularly apprehensive, to be restored to its ancient use by a slight check of the string which was suspended from his neck. The fine gentleman was the only talkative person of the party. He rode on—hung back—trotted from side to side—made an unheeded observation in the ear of the pensive Delmege on the state of the weather—intimated to Shine in a menacing way the utter fruitlessness of any corporeal resistance against his captors—whispered his men to be on their guard—for that big fat man was the strongest "warrant" at a hurley, and the best leaper in all Ireland—then, having exhausted every subject that might be suggested by the circumstances of each of his companions without eliciting any considerable portion of information, he fell back as a last resource upon himself—arranged his

wig—adjusted his sword-belt—looked up at the heavens—loosened the string of a tightly-packed *loody* or great-coat—and trembled for his head-gear—gave a history in detail of the the lives, characters, fortunes, and fashions of all the master tailors in Cork—struck off by a by-road to the price of pigs and cattle—convinced the passive Shine by the most unexceptionable syllogisms that twenty geese would consume, to a blade, as much grass as any cow—that bony pigs were always the best to buy on a fattening speculation—that bog dust was as fine manure as any for a red soil—that it was the greatest mistake to say the Limerick girls were the handsomest in Ireland—that the lightning was perfectly innocuous, as long as it maintained its reddish hue—that Catholicism, particularly as regarded Lent and Advent, was every thing but a reasonable creed—[the only point on which he obtained the semblance of an answer from the preacher]—that Dean Swift would be hanged as sure as there

was a cottoner in Cork, and there were plenty, sure, and good ones, too—that he himself was the most fashionable personage in the South of Ireland—and Lord Cartaret, the best Lord-Lieutenant that ever lived before or after the flood—and a thousand other *thats* with which the necessities of our tale will not permit us to encumber the reader's mind.

On a sudden a blue straggling light darted across the heavens, and a deep, rending crash of thunder seemed to tear the region from one extremity to the other. The unchecked and absolute blackness which ensued, left the party in so benighted a condition that all stopt short, as if by a sympathy of intelligence. The horses, startled by the suddenness of the transition, chafed, demi-volted, and finally remained stock still under their riders, snorting and champing the bit in the impatience of strong terror. A moment after, as if the windows of heaven had been opened for a second deluge, a torrent of thunder drops

was poured upon the travellers, so dense, so sudden, and so unflinchingly continued, that each particular individual in his own square foot of space received as much as would have served him for a bath.

The terrors of the storm now commenced in all their magnitude and grandeur. The thunder bellowed—howled—and clattered—the lightning flared—and darted, in wheeling circles and angles of painful brilliancy, before and about them. Sometimes a strong bolt, launched from the black womb of the vapour in which it was generated, hissed fiercely through the sparkling rain, and breaking with a rapid violence into a thousand lines of blue and dazzling splendour, lit up the vaulted vast of darkness into a momentary noon—which was as suddenly changed to a gloom as dense as that which was made palpable in the hands of the Egyptian spoilers. Then there was the silence of a second — deep and terrible—a hush of all nature—unbroken even by the

breathing of the pale and anxious wanderers —and immediately after, a rattling close above their heads, at first quick, harsh, and jarring, like the clatter of a musquet volley,—and gradually deepening and swelling as it receded, till its echoes boomed in the abyss of distance like the roar of a million park of artillery.

"Whish! hoo!" the grazier exclaimed, placing his hand above his ear, and endeavouring to check the plunging of his steed— "Did any body hear a 'halloo' behind us?— Ha! there it is again!"

"'Tis the wind that's splitting itself upon the Corrig-on-dhiol,"* said one of his retainers.

Another thunderclap drowned the response to this conjecture, and in the intervals of its expiring peals, the distant and long-protracted cry of a man's voice, proved it to be an erroneous one.

"I have my reasons," said the Palatine with

* Devil's Crag.

a gesture of alarm, laying his hand on the grazier's arm—"for not delaying an instant. Let us dash forward, in the name of Heaven!"

Again the imploring cry, renewed at a much more audible distance, seemed to appeal against this selfish counsel to the good feelings of the party. It was not altogether the influence of mere good feeling, however, which induced the obstinate gentleman of the sword and buckles to enter his *recusat* against the old Palatine's proposition. The slighting taciturnity with which the latter had treated him during the journey had predisposed him to adopt the contrary course, whatever it might be, to any which should be recommended by the old man. He plucked his arm pettishly away from the grasp of the latter, and instantly reined up his steed. Either unwilling to persevere in what appeared an unkindly procedure—or acting under the guidance of that piercing sagacity which enables some men to discover in a glance—a tone—a gesture—nay

in the very manner of an affectation itself—a tolerable indication of the whole machinery of the characters of those with whom they come in contact—acting, I say, under this influence, and perceiving the absolute hopelessness of any attempt to oversway the dogged resolution of the blockhead with whom he travelled, the old Palatine made no further effort to carry his own wishes into effect, but suffered their pursuers to approach.

"They're at the top o' the hill a'ready! I hear the tramping o' the horses feet—Whisht! Dash along! Naught was never in danger—Take care how you fall—Never welcome the thunder, will it never have done bellowing and let us hear the people."

"Hulloo-ee—hoo—hoo-ee!"

"Hoo—hoo-ee! here, lad!—Halt! ho! Will you never stop—ha! the fair sex! Fong a foïl! Where are you ———?"

The query was cut short by the sudden onset of a large, stout-limbed horse, which

dashed furiously through the group, covering the dandy grazier and his prisoner with a profusion of the puddle struck by the concussion of the animal's broad hoofs from the weltering ruts of the old and broken road. As they swept thus fiercely through the group, the horse chafing, snorting, and furiously contending against the restraint of the tightened rein—the rider by voice and action using every possible endeavour to restrain him—the gentleman of the wig and sword execrating both in the purest Gaelic—and the poor discomfited Shine patiently moaning within his compressed lips at this new misfortune; while these relative sounds, we say, proceeded—a sudden rent was made in the cloud immediately above them, and a volume of electric light was poured upon the spot, so intense and brilliant, as for a few seconds to enable each individual of the party to peruse in minute detail every portion of the person and accoutrements of the rest. For those few

seconds, the Palatine, whose eye was fixed in all the keenness of an acute curiosity upon the new comers, was enabled to discern the figure of a young man, keeping a firm seat on the wild steed, which it seemed to require an exertion almost as much of strength as of skill to govern—and endeavouring at the same time to uphold from the earth the crouching form of a female who sat before him, whose low—hurried—and agitated moans, mingling in the pauses of the thunder peal, produced a strange admixture of involuntary pity and terror on the mind of the hearer.

"Murther! murther alive! only see where he has the famale!" ejaculated the Cork gentleman.

"'Tis he!—'tis they!——Join them and hasten, Sir, for Heaven's sake," said the woman, clinging to her protector, and gathering her turned-up wrapper hood-wise about her face for the purpose, as it seemed, of keeping off the heavy rain which poured in

torrents upon her, and shading its features at the same time from the strong light.

"A bad night, gentlemen," said the young man, wishing to assure himself of the identity of those whom he addressed.

"If you'd tell us news we'd thank you," returned the *buck*. "And pray what was your business with us—or who are you at all? We have the right of challengers, by all the rules of right tactics. Witness the catechumen's proverb—

'Who goes there?'
'A grenadier!'
'What do you want?'
'A bottle o' beer.'
'Where's your money?'
'In my pocket.'
'Where 's your pocket?'
'I forgot it.'

Answer speedily, Sir, lest you become liable to the application of the catechist's concluding octo-syllabic—

'Gid-a-gone, you foolish blockhead!'"

"You are the merriest man in a thunder-storm I ever saw," said the new-comer, "but I think if you are disposed to proceed we may as well dash forward. Your merriment will do little to wring the drenching rain from my poor fellow-traveller's slight dress—"

"O—hush! hush!" whispered the woman, "do not speak of me. I feel nothing. I am used to this. But, for Heaven's sake, spur on your horse. They will follow."

"I don't know what may be the customs of the ladies of Limerick," placidly continued the *buck*, "but in the County Cork it would be considered an instance of questionable taste to select such an evening as this for an excursion. Here, Sir!" tossing his *loody* to the young man—"the choice is between a famale and my new wig—and as I'm an Irish-man, I'd rather have it hanging as lank as a cow's tail down my back in the morning, than that one curl of the humblest creature that ever wore bonnet should receive a

section from a single drop of such a torrent as this!"

"The *buckeeny* has a spark o' the gentleman in him, for all!" observed the taciturn Abie Switzer—(the first remark, by the way, for which we have been enabled to afford him space during the entire day.)

"Do you travel far on the Crag Road?" inquired the stranger, after he had wrapped the coat about his suffering *protegée*.

"As far as Drumscanlon, where I can make as many welcome as the house can accommodate—Ay—and more too—for poor old Byrne usn't——"

"We may as well, I think, be riding forward as we talk," said old Segur.

"If we stay this way," added Abie, "there'll one of us be roasted for the rest for supper."

"Whoever that poor woman is, Sir," continued the Palatine, "it would be as well if she turned on the other side, for the wind blows on *that*."

"The blessing of a broken heart fall on you!" murmured the woman, as her protector took the old man's hint.

"Bless him, does she?—Why, she did not so much as say 'thanky, kindly,' to me for the loan o' my coat!" muttered the grazier, as he shrugged up his shoulders, and felt the rain already penetrating his green broad-cloth.

The whole party proceeded as rapidly as the starting, rearing, plunging, and *shying* of their steeds would permit. The lightning flashes, which still continued momently glancing in various degrees of brilliancy upon their path, forming a very sufficient apology for the contumacy of the animals.

"I was saying," said the Cork gentleman, "that poor Byrne usn't to limit his invitations to the dimensions of his house. Many and many a night—you don't hear me, Sir?" he continued, pressing close to the young man—"many a pleasant night, after tiring down every girl in the hall at a slip-jig, I've

stretched myself abroad in the hay-loft as comfortable as could be, and the Blaneys of the Hill in the cow-house under me, with such joking and laughing.—The fowl-house was a great place for us too, I remember. Old Missiz Hasset (that was hardly young Mrs. Hasset then)—and by the way, talking of her, she 's at Drumscanlon to-night, moreover, or ought to be—used to have the ticks and quilts brought out o' the cars, and made up snug and coozy among the turkeys, and the rest o' them, for the neighbours—and sometimes we'd have little Lilly herself——Hirrups, Sir! keep your horse steady, if you please!—we'd have little Lilly Byrne herself, a fine little curly-headed rogue—little merry-eyes, as I used to call her—coming out, peeping through the slits o' the door, and laughing.—Poor Lilly! I recollect saying to her, one day, while I was tossing her up on my toe, and she laughing, and crowing, and her hair flying about her, and her cheeks as rosy as a rose itself—I

remember saying to her, says I, 'the day will come yet, when a lock o' that hair will be a prouder gift for a young man to wear, than a coat by Buckmaster*—the day will come,' says I, and I looking at her, this way, in the face, 'the day will come when that eye will make many a gallant heart ache, and many a young man's cheek grow pale,' says I, and I looking at her, thinking of it—'and when that lip that 's there, so innocent, will have the word of life or death upon it—isn't that great?' —and she laughing, not understanding a word o' what I said, and sure 'twas all true for me."

The grazier did not know what a sincere and agonized assent his words received in the heart of the poor young man who rode by his side.

"I think," continued the talkative bore, who wished, indeed, very pardonably, to divert

* The reader may, if he pleases, imagine an ancestor of the present respectable fashionist of Bond-street.

his attention from the now perfectly piteous condition to which he felt himself reduced, by the exercise of a tongue

> 'As true as truest horse,
> That yet would never tire.'

"I think," said he, "Lilly will verify my prophecy, if she has not done it yet—but poh! what's the use o' talking? I saw her when I came this way the other day, and 'twould puzzle the Danes to tell what was come over her.—Her cheek, Sir—her plump, ripe cheek—that you might play a hand of fives against, so worn down and pale-looking—and her little hand so damp and cold as she put it into mine—and such a death-like, religious smile about her sweet lips—and then, instead of meeting me with a jump—and a hop—and a laugh—and that little merry 'hoop!' that used to come from between her lips, as sweet as love itself, Sir—and as fine as a gold thread—she met me as her mother might have done—standing upright on both her feet, putting one before the other

when she walked—and having no more of the merry hoyden that I knew, left about her, but only all her sweetness. You'd wonder to look at her. I didn't take my eyes off of her for as good and better than an hour. Her eyes were a little red, too. 'Twould move you, Sir, if you were to be looking at her."

"It does! it does!" replied his companion, in a tone of deep feeling.

"Sir, I'm sure you're a gentleman," said the grazier warmly, at once attributing to the influence of his own pathos in the narration, all the effect which the circumstances themselves had produced upon his auditor——"I'm sure you are, and I like you. The fact, however, may be naturally explained, as, in honest truth, her mother did account for it to me, in a confidential way.—Talking of confidence, by the bye, I'll not tell you what she said, for these things, however trifling they may appear to men of sense, are not likely to be serviceable, when spoken of to the class of unmarried

girls. And after all, it was but a girlish fancy, which will go off with the next fine weather. In the affections, as in grazing, the autumnal produce is always the sweetest. A girl's first love is too sudden, too luxuriant, Sir—it is parched and dried up in its own fire—there's no health about it—but mow that away with a few months' absence—let the heart be trampled a little—let the soft showers of disappointment fall upon it—and then you have it as fresh, and kind, and gentle as a field of upland clover."

"A thorough grazier's sentiment," said Kumba, almost involuntarily, within his own heart—"When was this, Sir?" he asked, aloud.

"A few days since, I was at Drumscanlon. I made Lilly laugh at last, reminding her of the time when I used to bring her the *bareen brac*,* and tell her the story of the wee-wee

* Spotted cake. Bread made with flour and raisins mingled. It is one of the festive delicacies of Christmas times in Ireland.

woman and her bunch o' blackberries. By the way, they were expecting the priest there at that time, for you must know, Lilly is grown so pious, that they 're beginning to think she'll make a fair run for a convent, some fine morning. But we'll talk more o' this by an by. We 'll be late for supper, I'm afraid."

The party quickened their pace.

CHAPTER IX.

Confusion now hath made his master-piece—
Most sacrilegious murder hath broke ope
The Lord's anointed temple, and stole thence
The life o' the building!

SHAKSPEARE.

THERE is a proverb current among the Irish peasantry, which, as we have not been in the habit of obtruding these aphorisms of vulgar wisdom upon him hitherto, the reader will excuse our transcribing. It runs, in English, something in this way—"Carry a goat to the chapel, and he never will stop until he mounts the altar." The truth of the axiom is more frequently exemplified in the annals of Irish

crime, than, perhaps, in those of most other nations. The reason of this may be found in the simple fact, that Irish crime, like Irish virtue, is not the creature of the mind but of the heart. They are a people more frequently betrayed into guilt by the impulses of strong feeling, than the cold suggestions of convenience; and in proportion to the violence of the stimulus applied, will be found the depth and atrocity of the outrage that is committed. For the same reason also, it appears that instances of a cold-hearted attachment to guilt, having no more immediate motive than habitude, are, proportionably to the extent of crime existing, very rare. The ruffian who has been lashed, through his course of blood and outrage, by the hand of circumstance, is liable, when the scourge is withdrawn, and a pause is left him for reflection, to sudden accesses of self-detestation and remorse, which would seldom be experienced by one whose guilt was determined before it was acted, and whose

career had been the election, in any degree, of deliberate reason. By following in the steps of the unhappy wretch, whose *alias* has furnished us with a name for this tale, through the following pages, the reader may find an illustration of both the idiosyncrasies we have attempted to account for—the capability of utter abandonment of all moral principle, and the liability to a sudden change of feeling in the very head and front of the criminal's offending:—a hue of national character, which is only wanting in wretches so completely regenerated in depravity, as the white-haired murderer—Red Rody.

We should also have called the reader's attention to the fact which is perfectly observable at the present day, as we may suppose it to have been at the period of which we write—that when those Irishmen, who live by a misappropriation of the goods of others, meet together for the purpose of agitating an excursion in the way of their vocation, they do not confine

themselves to a solitary outrage, but calculate upon effecting all that may be accomplished within the period to which they limit their absence; insomuch, that robberies, and perhaps murders, sometimes take place on the same night, at places so remote from each other, that it would almost appear sufficient to prove a man's identity as a partner in the one, to enable him to enter an *alibi* on the other offence.

Suil Dhuv and his three companions had more to accomplish on this evening than the reader has already been made aware of, and one—the first—act of violence which they proposed committing, was of a peculiar and more startling nature than any in which the Coiner had yet been engaged.

He had accorded an instant and even eager assent when the proposition was first made by one of the gang, Mun Maher, the fellow whose insolence he had checked by so summary a procedure in the hold of the gang. He had

then, however, only considered the advantage which was to be derived from it, namely, the acquisition of a sufficient quantity of silver for the purpose of carrying on their illegal toil.—Upon the means he had not bestowed a single thought, after he had once satisfied himself of their practicability.

As he rode, however, along the country with his companions, a new train of circumstances conspired to shake him from the indifference in which he had fortified his spirit. The very agitation of the contemplated enterprise in which his personal wishes were chiefly interested, was calculated to prepare the way in his breast for the admission of a gentler tone of feeling, than he usually carried about him on such expeditions. The district which they were approaching, and which speedily began to spread its well-cultivated and party-coloured surface before their eyes, was the soil in which his childhood had been passed; and memories of childhood hours—whether those

hours have been spent in darkness, or light—in showers or sunshine—are the truest key that can be found to draw forth from their rugged prison the yet surviving tendernesses of the human heart.

As they wound along the side of a craggy hill, composed of a brittle, culmy soil, Suil Dhuv drew up his horse, as if for the purpose of making some observations—but in reality with the view of indulging himself in a musing contemplation of the quiet evening landscape, which, independently of any associations, presented a picture sufficiently alluring to account for the action, had *that* been its only motive. Immediately beneath them, on the right, and extending far into the distance, lay a well-nurtured and fertile champaign—rich in all the glorious hues of ripening summer—the dark green potatoe-field—the already russet meadow—the golden rape—the bearded barley, billowing in the light wind and receiving from the reddish sunlight a variety of light and shade,

such as that which charmed the bright eyes of the Dublin beauties, when first the master of the chain and *filling* conjured from his loom, in all its shadowy magnificence and cameleon-like insecurity of hue, the now forlorn and neglected *tabinet*—these, together with the glitter of cottage windows through the bowering and close mantled hedges of black briar—perriwinkle, primrose, hawthorn, the red blossomed snuff-weed, the virgin meadow-sweet, wild strawberries, wild heart's ease, and dog-roses; the wreathing of the light blue smoke through the humble chimney, which gave an involuntary feeling of comfort to the spectator—the flax-garden, with its delicate stems and pale-blue flower—the ridges (drills were then unknown) of early white-eyes, already delighting the eye with their white, purple, and peach-coloured blossoms—all refreshing the organs of smell with a sweetness which (but, perhaps, *that* was the result of association)—we have vainly sought to mate among the exotics of

Kensington—these, I say, presented a beautifully variegated and gigantic tablet, over which many a mountain stream unrolled its sparkling scroll, intersecting the superfice at a thousand fantastic angles.

On the other side lay a bog on which many groups of peasants were observed at work—some *footing*, or raising the *sods* of turf on end, for the purpose of drying more rapidly; some cutting the material fresh from the mass with their *slanes**—others shaping sods from the soft pulpy soil with their hands—others again tossing the dry turf into a *rail*, a sort of vehicle fastened in a *car* (or cart), for the purpose of having it conveyed home, and built up into a snug reek as a provision against the winter—while the driver stood near the horse's head, lazily looking on, his cord-whip tied sashwise across his shoulder, and whistling the keen-the-cawn, in a loud, full, and melodious tone, to the drooping and weary animal, who ex-

* A kind of spade made for the purpose.

pressed his pleasure at the attention, by a gentle oscillating motion of the ears, as he mused over a handful of soil,* plucked from the nearest hedge, a kindness which in all probability he appreciated still more highly than the music.

The occasional shrill scream of a nesting snipe, startled from its rushy hiding-place by the too near approach of some hostile footstep—the merry barking of the curs of the hamlet, as they gambolled, in feigning warfare, in the sunshine—the "thrup! thrup!" of the milk-maid, as with *spancel* and can in hand, she summoned the cows from their distant pasture, to deposit their evening tribute at the farmer's door—the kindly lowing of the docile animals, as they turned from their fodder, and with matronly and gentle pace, obeyed the well-known voice of the summoner—the occasional snatch of a wild and merry ballad from some pleasantly disposed individual of the laborious group in

* A kind of long grass.

the bog—the loud though distant peal of laughter that cheered him in his exertions—the shrill and solitary cackling of some forlorn goose, that had lagged, like a *miching* urchin, behind the flock, and now lost sight of its companions—the droning sound of the little boy's reeds, cut from the green corn stems, and slit in the manner of a flageolet—the plaintive and monotonous cry of some wren's-man or yellow-hammer, that, compelled to forsake its nest, tainted by the touch of some prying school-boy, mourned its desolation on some lofty thorn—the occasional shrilly shouting of a group of sturdy boys at their game of evening *goal* or *hurly*—the sweet and murmuring voices of the peasant girls on the side of the distant stream, some washing the *skeogh* (or boat-basket), full of potatoes for their evening meal, and sometimes in a merry mood, shaking the *crusheen** with a gesture of menace at the lads on the

* A short stick with a flat piece of timber at the end, used in washing potatoes.

other side; others beetling their linen on a smooth stone, and others again spreading the already whitened garments upon the yellow and blooming furze bushes—those formed the principal points of sight and of sound, which were scattered over the face of the landscape—while the whole was spanned by a soft blue sky chequered with flakes of white and crimson vapour, and rendered still more lovely by the loaded serenity that was in the air.

Touched by the tender beauty of the scene which lay before him, and still more by the recollections which it awakened within his soul, Suil Dhuv prolonged his pause to a degree which at length excited the impatience of his companions.

"They're not beginnen to light up the fires yit," said one.

"What fires?" inquired Mun Maher.

"Why, the fires upon the mountains and places, in regard of St. John's Eve.—Sure

this is the twinty-third—the Eha-na-Shawn. 'Twill be a bad evenen for it, I'm afeerd. Do you see the swallows how low they're skimmen? and—*fioch-e-shin!*—look there, the dog eating the grass."

"Come, Sir!—Suil Dhuv! Don't you hear uz? 'Twill be late with uz, I'm thinken, Sir.—The chapel is in the glyn over, a good start from uz yit."

"Have you the wrench and hammer?" inquired their leader, in a low tone.

"Safe enough, I'll be bail.—Look at them!"

"It is a fair evening for so foul a deed!" thought Suil Dhuv, but he *only* thought it—for he was too well aware of the temper of his men to hazard anything like an indication of distaste for the enterprise they were engaged upon.

"There is no use in tiring *all* the horses," he said, as they descended the hill, and approached a cross road. Mun, you and I will do this first business together, and, my lads, ye

may as well stop here for us, or ride round the road and meet us at the Hill o' Drumscanlon."

Both the men touched their hats in token of assent.

"And there's no fear, Sir, of the travellers' getten the start of uz?"

"Make yourself easy on that head—I drew the charges myself, and saw Maney filing the clenching of the hoof-nails with my own eyes."

"O if that's the case, we may count it done;—Maney's was the sure finger if he touched them. I see him at work at 'em meself the other day, an he grinnen like a horse aten thistles—the day of the blind man, you know, Sir, in the glyn below."

Suil Dhuv started and turned pale. The recollection of the act to which the man alluded had often before now occurred to him, but never in a similar state of feeling. He put spurs to his horse, and rode on with Mun Maher, the last speaker and his companion

remaining on the spot, and looking after them with some surprise.

" He's afraid he'll be late at the chapel," said one to the other—" but let us ride round, fair an aisy, as he says—and, stay—we have time enough—we'll just step into the shebeen-house over"—pointing to a little wretched cabin, in the exterior of which no farther indication could be discovered of its claims to the consideration of a caravansery, than the broken bottle which was stuck in the thatch, and a little piece of turf, wrapped in a brown paper, and dangling from one of the *scollops** over the low doorway. " There'll nobody see uz there —an I'm so dhry I could drink faster thin a lime-burner's bag.

When once a certain train of feeling has been laid in the soul, it is extraordinary to observe what a slight accession of circumstances are required to stimulate and

* Or " squeeze-loops," little osier twigs used in binding the thatch.

strengthen it until it has acquired a mastery over the judgment and the will itself. Every new sight, every new sound, that arrested the sense of the Coiner as he pursued his route with his companion, served to confirm him in the disposition to mournful retrospection which the simple accident of a fine sunny evening, and the revisiting a soil untrod by him for many a year, had occasioned within his heart. The corn-fields, yet in ear, where he had been stationed, while yet a child, to terrify, by the clattering of two flat stones, the dark-plumed plunderers of the neighbouring rookery from his patron's tillage—the very meadows in which he had assisted at harvest time in filling the load of sweet hay on the car, for the purpose of stacking in the *haggart*—the paddock to which he had been dispatched on many an evening as fine as this, with an armful of grass for the weaning lambs, and a pot of milk and hay-water for the young calves—the very sally-grove where he was

accustomed to walk and chat with her whom he had lured from her father's door (a door that had opened so hospitably to him in his necessities)—and whom he was now preparing to desert—all these objects acted like fire upon the remorse that was already beginning to fester within the bosom of the guilty wanderer.

A crooked and (still) broken-up avenue leading to a farm house near the road side, was the next object that caught his eyes—and he again involuntarily slackened his pace, for the purpose of gazing upon the dwelling. The place was as familiar to him as his own home would have been—indeed, it was a house in which a very considerable number of the years of his unsettled boyhood had been spent; but it was sadly changed in appearance from what it had been when he first beheld it in his young days. It was then a sweet cottage—embowered in foliage and fragrance—with all the indications of rural comfort and content about

it. It had now a desolate and uninhabited air. The neat plot before the door was half converted into tillage, and the remainder disfigured and turned up by the grunting burghesses of the adjacent piggery. A muddy pool had settled under the front windows, in which a few meagre-looking ducks were dabbling and diving in silence. The hedge which encompassed the plot was broken and torn up —and at one spot, had completely given way, blocking up almost half the avenue with its ruins.—The elder tree, beneath which he had constructed a summer-seat which he often shared with the pretty daughter of his host, was now reduced to a stump.—The house itself was stript of its decent garment of rough-casting—the thatch beaten in at several places—and the chimneys dismantled: these emblems of decay, together with the silence that reigned over the place, struck new feelings of melancholy into the young man's spirit.

"All was still
But the lattice that flapped when the wind was shrill;
Though raves the gust, and floods the rain,
No hand shall close its clasp again."

A single poplar which stood erect in its graceful slenderness of form in the centre of the little plain, like a gnomon on a dial-plate -flung its lengthened shadow in a direct line toward the front door. The Coiner started unconsciously as he observed it, for that was the indication of the expiry of the sixth hour in the afternoon. Breathing a short, quick sigh, he checked the reins of his steed, which was making advantage of the meditative disposition of its rider, to crop a mouthful of herbage from the hedge over which he was gazing, and hurried forward with a spirit still more disabled than it had been before his arrival at this spot, for the dreadful task to which he had endeavoured to bend up the energies of his nature.

He was doomed, nevertheless, to expe-

rience still farther, and more heart-shaking disquietudes. As he approached the spot which was destined to be the scene of the first act of the guilty drama of the night, his attention was directed by his companion to a little *fort* on their right, which Mun pointed out with a grim smile and nod of the head, as much as to say—"'Twas a good job that was done there, Sir." The situation of the spot was such as might, without farther explanation from the speaker, have intimated the nature of that "good" deed. As Suil Dhuv raised his head in obedience to the light tap of his companion's whip, and looked around him for the first time since he had left the cottage, he was chilled and startled by the sudden alteration which appeared to have taken place in the face of the country, and the stern and sullen contrast which the scene he now beheld presented, to that on which his fancy and his memory had been luxuriating a short time before. The verdure—the beauty

—the sights of promise and of plenty, and the sounds of mirth and light-heartedness, had vanished as completely as if the wand of a malicious wizard had been laid over the face of the picture.—Before the travellers, at a few perches distant, lay a long, deep, straggling glynn, covered with heath, bramble, short hazle bushes, sloe trees, wild crab, and other stunted and dark-looking individuals of the family of underwood. A brown, boggy stream crept, then bounded, now rippled, then roared, and again murmured at various points of its winding progress through the sullen cleft—its dark waters, in several instances, narrowing and chafing against the ledges of crag, into a snow-white foam, little masses of which floated down the black stream, like solitary virtues on the gloomy river of a bad world's history.—The sun, which had checquered with so many sweet varieties of light and shade the landscape he had left behind, served here only to increase the dreary

dulness of the scene. A flat boggy plain or *inch* (a plot of level ground lying near the marge of a rivulet)—covered with the long tabid grass, which is indigenous to such a soil, and assumes the appearance of hay already dry, while it is yet in the act of vegetating, spread its dusky tablet on their left, at the foot of a rocky eminence, while the stream, forming a small semicircle around it, cut it sharply away from the base of a steep and bare cliff, over the summit of which, adorned with a coronal of the red-berried mountain ash, the heavy sunlight darted its sloping rays, which, corrected as they were by the mistiness of the place to a still more hazy faintness, threw an air of slight and softening indistinctness over the rugged outlines of the scene.—Near the base of this cliff, in a dark angle on which the light had a still more limited influence than on the more exposed features of the picture, stood a thatched chapel, a plain oblong pile with a small iron

cross fastened at the top of the gable, into which the door, an unpanneled plane of deal timber, marked with the same sacred symbol in red paint, was made to open. A narrow road, winding down the hill, formed the approach to this humble temple—and a straggling path, presenting a short cut to this road, from the spot where the Coiner stood, ran almost under their horses' feet. This was pointed out by Maher, who dismounted, and flung the stirrups over the high pummelled saddle of his horse, as he observed it. Suil Dhuv followed his example, and threw the reins of his steed to his companion :—

"Remain here until I return," said he—"and if any danger should approach—do not forget, for your life, to give me the token. Where are the things ?"

Maher handed him a wrenching iron—a bundle of picks—a file—and small hammer.

"It's a droll* thing if they were left there,"

* Extraordinary.

the Coiner continued. "Wouldn't they be safer in his own chest?"

"Is it Father O'Regan's? No, indeed—I heard Watty the clerk say meself, that he was afeerd of 'em there, in regard o' the Dillons that he denounced from the althar o' count o' their nightwalken. There's no harm in thryen at any rate; and besides, the priest puts great trust in the chapel above all other places—for as he said himself, though there's a power o' villyans goen, there's *feow* o' them that are wanten both in the *fear* and the *love* o' God, together."

"Ha! ha! he did not know you or me, Maher!" said Suil Dhuv, striving by a painful exertion to laugh away the dark remorse that made the perspiration stand and glisten upon his brow. "Walk the horses softly here, and I'll be with you in ten minutes." And bounding over the stile, he hurried along the path towards the road.

'That's the quarest laugh I uvur heerd him

laugh yit," said Mun Maher in soliloquy, as he gazed after the ruffian; "I wonder, now, could it be anythen that would be comen over him, afther all? Isn't it greatly he was thinken all along the road?"

Something, most assuredly, *was* "coming over" the young man in question—some (to himself) unaccountable state of feeling—a distress—an alarm—an uneasiness—which he could trace to no possible external influence—and which went on deepening and fastening upon his spirit in proportion to the violence of the exertions which he made to shake it off. He thought of his past crimes with pain and deep remorse; but it was not of that healthy kind which induces a longing after the peace of penitence, and casts a stumbling-block in the way of a guilty purpose.

On the contrary, the deeper and the fiercer the pangs were, which every reviving recollection struck into his heart, the more he raged and chafed, the firmer and more daring his

resolution became; and even while his limbs shook with fear at thought of the retribution he had already earned, he burned with the eagerness of his desire, to cast another yet heavier debt than all into the already fearful account. His soul might be supposed, in this respect, in a state of disease analogous to that which induces the patient who is suffering under the affliction of an acute nervous attack, to fling himself on the fire, dash his head against the wall, or use any other violent means of counteracting, by a different though still more terrible excitement, the anguish of that which is already preying upon his frame.

As he passed the fort which had been pointed out to him by his companion, and which lay close to the path he was pursuing, he started, shivered with an emotion like fear, and then stamped his foot against the earth, and uttered a furious oath against his own weakness. He raised his hand over his eyes, and attempted to hurry forward, with his face

turned another way, then suddenly stopping short, and meditating for a moment, he set his teeth hard, and said:—"It was an ugly deed, after all. The old, dark man that couldn't defend himself, nor know what was coming upon him It was a coward's blow that drew his blood!" This was spoken something like the manner of self-condemnation which a sportsman might be supposed to feel, who had shot a hare sleeping in its form.—"He was kind to me too, when I wanted kindness badly enough —But" [fiercely]—"what hurt? He blotted all from my mind, when he took me from the only friend I had" (then, with a sudden and hurried self-recollection)—"Eh? what am I doing here—Well, to be sure, see this! and the sun going down already, and all I have to do, before I meet *him*. Think o' that, why!" And once more assuming an appearance of steadiness and settled energy, he rushed from the fort.

He did not long, however, retain possession

of this accidental firmness. As he placed his foot on the little stile which connected the foot-path with the hill road, an old, palsied, white-headed woman, her hair gathered up in a roll under her decent white kerchief, a few sods of turf and faggots in her check apron, and a string of large horn beads in her hand, met him at the other side. Raising her aged head as if with an effort, and expanding her sunken eyes as they fell upon his figure, she stopt short, and broke in upon the litany she had been telling, to wish the stranger a "good evenen, *kindly*." Strangely moved by the contrast in the designs and occupations of both, the Coiner paused, and gazing fixedly on the old woman, returned her greeting with a degree of tenderness in his voice that arrested her attention, in turn. Perceiving that her route lay over the hedge, which was no slight obstacle for old and sapless bones like hers to surmount, and acting under the influence of one of those unaccountable sensations

to which his present state of agitation rendered him liable, he stept back for the purpose of suffering the devotee to pass, first, over the stile.

"Goen to pay your rounds at the chapil, over, this evenen, I'll be bound, you are, now —a lanña-ma-chree?" [child of my heart]— she said, as she placed her withered and bony fingers (from which the rosary still depended) on the wall.

"Going to the chapel, indeed, a-vaneestha,"* replied the Coiner, smiling, in an access of fresh and stinging remorse, upon her.

"E' then, may all that you do there be remembered to you at the day o' judgmint, in the last o' the world, an through all eternity, fur uvur, av you'll only jest gi' me the hand till I'll get over this place its so *cross*, entirely, my old bones will be broke in me body, within."

Without paying any attention to, indeed

* Old woman.

almost without hearing, certainly without considering, her kindly meant benediction, the Coiner raised her in his arms with as much ease as he would have done a child, and placed her gently on the soft path at the other side; after which he continued his course, along the road.

"Millia buehus,* thin!" exclaimed the pious old creature, "and the Lord keep his eye upon you this blessed night, and hear the prayers of his holy saint John, upon his own eve, that you may ever an always continue in grace, and as well inclined as you are this moment—for its a good sign o' you to help the poor old widow, and to be goen to the chapil on the Eha-na-Shawn, while many another boy oulder than yourself is at the *goal* playen, or in the publican's, this way."

So much for appearances!

The act of gentleness which he had done, once more contributed to throw Suil Dhuv

* A thousand thanks.

back upon the interrupted mood of retrospection which had been growing upon him throughout the evening. The little green spot, also, before the chapel brought many an old and peaceful remembrance to his mind. He recollected the many summer mornings when the bright Sabbath sun beheld him hastening down this wild path, his neatly frilled white linen shirt lying gracefully on his open bosom; a small, carefully tendered "Path to Paradise" in his hand; his black and shining curls combed into a beautiful and closely-clustering mass; his shoes, a luxury only allowed him on occasions, when a special decency of appearance was deemed requisite, glistening in the sunshine; a little bottle thrust into his side pocket, which was given him by the old woman who had dressed him up, for the purpose of having it replenished from the can of holy water at the altar's foot—in this Sunday trim he had often hurried over this very ground, his heart, in its innocence of feeling, trembling

with anxiety lest he should lose the benefit of the Mass, an evil which is regarded with a peculiar fear, in Irish humble life, even among those whose principles, unhappily, are lax enough in many other respects.

He paused, to gaze upon the little turfen seat where the pastor of the rural flock was accustomed to sit in the sunshine, to talk familiarly with the cottagers on their domestic affairs, or hear the confession of a penitent. He recollected the time when he had knelt on the green sod by the side of the holy man—his heart sinking within him with fear, as he meditated the humiliating disclosure of some boyish offence, an infraction of the Sabbath, or a word spoken in anger to some play-fellow—and the gentle monitory voice of his adviser seemed once more to murmur in his ear.

His thoughts naturally reverted to his present condition, and he almost unconsciously put the question to his own heart, how different and how dark, in the comparison, would be

the account which he should now have to render to the same minister of peace, if he were to rise from the quiet grave, in which he had long been sleeping the sweet sleep of the blameless, and resume his ancient place on this humble tribunal. The last fancy startled him. As a celebrated divine,* with that insight into the machinery of the human heart which characterizes a great portion of his writings, has said, that long habit of self-willed contempt for, and obstinate resistance to, the truth of religion is often apt to substitute a mechanical superstition in its place; so it might now be observed of the stained and hardened soul that stood, with the purpose of the last of human offences—black, daring, deadly sacrilege—before the door of the temple, that the fouler and fiercer his resolution became, the more weak and nervous was his frame, and the more fearfully active his memory and his imagination. The short, quick breathings of the wind through the dry

* Jean Baptiste Massillon.

thatch made him start and tremble, while sudden forms, of he knew not what or whom, seemed to flit before and about him, through the evening gloom.—Again his memory conjured up new sights and sounds of terror from the familiar spot on which he stood. He beheld the buried clergyman, robed in the sacred vestments of his office, lifting his hands above his head, and pouring forth, as he had once done, the denunciations of the fearful judgment of the impenitent, from that awful text, the words of which had made the young blood of the Coiner curdle in its channels, when he had first heard them uttered—"I go my way, and you shall seek me, and you shall not find me, and you shall die in your sin!" The recollection of this occasion completely unhinged the courage of the unhappy wretch. He trembled violently, flung himself unconsciously on his knees—struck his breast rapidly and violently with his clenched fist—muttered a hurried snatch of the half-forgotten

rosary—and yet, by some strange influence, amid all this agitation and remorse, the thought of desisting from the crime, which he meditated at that very moment, scarcely once occurred to him.

Vague and general notions of an amended life, not in any instance assuming the vigour or sincerity of a positive intention, glanced across his spirit at intervals, while he busied himself in preparing his instruments, and examined the door and windows of the building. The very security which seemed to attend his undertaking, the absence of all human obstacle, the facility which the loneliness of the place itself presented, the slight resistance which the door seemed likely to oppose to his entrance, all furnished him with matter for new distrust. He paused before the building with that feeling of fearful suspicion which chills the heart of the bravest soldier, when he finds a position totally silent and undefended where he expected

to meet with an opposition worthy of its importance.

The sullen dash of the waters behind him began to boom upon his hearing, like the sound of distant thunder.—He struck fiercely at the lock of the door, then started and trembled as the many echoes of the blow came back upon him from the rents and hollows of the cliff and glynn—and again repeated the strokes with double vehemence. At length, flinging the hammer away, he stept a few paces back—then dashing himself furiously against it, he sent it crashing round upon its hinges.

We dare not follow the sacrilegious wretch through all the detail of his impieties in the interior of the building. The whole proceeding, from this moment, was one of such absolute delirium, that he could hardly be said to have acted it with consciousness. He rushed to the recess in which the object of his search —the silver chalice or ciboreum,—was kept, forced it open, flung himself on his knees once

more, clasped his hands, prostrated himself on the earth, started to his feet, snatched the sacred vessel, dashed *the contents,* the sight of which almost maddened him, upon the altar—and fled in an abandonment of utter fear along the aisle, panting heavily, crossing himself, and striking his breast, and muttering prayers and curses blended—while his sight swam and wandered wildly over the place, his ears seemed to ring with the din of mingled thunders, hymns, and laughter; flakes of whitish light darted with throbs of anguish from his eyeballs; the air about him grew hot and suffocating; the darkening vault of the night seemed to press with a horrid weight upon his brain; and his conscience, rising like a buried giant, from beneath the mountains of crime he had cast upon it, revealed, and almost realized the Pandemonium which his slighted, though unforgotten faith had pointed out to him, with a warning finger in his days of early innocence.

CHAPTER X.

Gobbo. Pray you, Sir, stand up, I' am sure you are no Launcelot, my boy.

Launcelot. Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing: I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.—SHAKSPEARE.

THE same red sun which had lighted the old Palatine and his party on their road by the Corrig-on-Dhiol, beheld the Coiner's accomplice, Mun Maher, pacing impatiently up and down the road near the *fort*—the *sugan collar** of his own, and the bridle of his leader's horse, both resting on his arm, while

* A rude kind of bridle, or halter, made of hay.

he busied himself in keeping peace between the animals, a question having arisen as to the right of property in the nutritious succedaneum which encircled the head of Mun Maher's charger, and which, in the opinion of the better-appointed steed, was capable of being appropriated to a more gratifying purpose than that of a mere symbol of subserviency.

Mun Maher would have been much the fitter person (for the purposes of the gang) to have sent on the enterprise which the Suil Dhuv had undertaken. He was one of those happy characters who are relieved by Nature from the evil of either thinking or feeling deeply on any subject, and whose vice or virtue is the result altogether of accident and habit; who take whatever little ideas they may possess altogether upon trust, and live, as one* of the most independent of the tribe of independent thinkers bitterly expresses it—

* Locke.

"upon the alm's basket—on scraps of begged opinions."

Maher's tone of mind or feeling, in consequence, was always formed by the company into which circumstances had thrown him last. He was ferocious after he had conversed for an hour with Red Rody—spirited, fiery, and ambitious while in the presence of Suil Dhuv—given to *crusheening** when he and Jerry got into a corner together—and he never left the room where Maney O'Neil sat, without a passion for roguery and low cheating.

Neither was this camelion-like quality of imitation confined to the moral composition of the man. He generally assumed with the tone of mind imparted by those into whose society he was thrown, the gesture, the voice, and even the very air of the features. By a singular flexibility of countenance, similar to that which, even in these days of the Drama's

* Gossipping.

disgrace, enables a Mathews to collect around his green cloth and lamps, a laughing circle of her once-generous patrons from the world of the Exclusives themselves—by such a capability was Mun Maher enabled, even without the intention or consciousness of it, to adapt his face and manner entirely to those of his companions—changing occasionally from Jerry's soft, open gaze, to the hard-knit brow and fixed stare of Suil Dhuv—the stupid, foolish eye of Maney, and even, occasionally, to adopt the palsied agitation of Rody himself. He was certain, moreover, to remain in the condition of mind in which he had been last placed, until some new archetype was presented to him—for (like the bird of the American forests, that is songless in itself, yet can become the pupil or even the rival of the nightingale), he might be said to have no positive or original existence of his own, but to present at all times the *double* of some neighbour or acquaintance—playing the same

part in the world which a loser plays at a game of forfeits, who is condemned to receive and retain an attitude from each of the company in turn.

The same feeling, moreover, which would render such a one impatient at being left for any considerable time in the same position, made Mun fret and chafe at a great rate whenever he was left long alone. He remained, for some time after Suil Dhuv left him, with his arms folded and his eyes fixed musingly through his gathered brows upon the ground—then led his horses slowly up and down, wondered at the long delay made by his companion (a considerable time before the latter had reached his destination)—and at last, taking from his coat-pocket a bundle of smoke-stained, whited-brown papers stitched together in the form of a book, in which the print, composed of a strange jumble of types of all shapes and sizes, was scarcely discernable in the gloom—(a species of confusion of which

our London readers may be enabled to form some idea by walking as far as the dead-wall in Oxford-street, or any other dead-wall where those elegant specimens of typography from "Pitt's and Son, at the Seven Dials," flutter on their pack-thread in the dusty street gale, and where, with reverence be it spoken, in the friendless hours of our own literary noviciate in the great Babel, we were wont to charm away the remembrance of many a cold repulse and many a stinging disappointment)—taking, we repeat (craving the reader's indulgence for our long parenthesis)—taking such a book from his coat-pocket, and turning over a few of the well-fingered and dog's-eared pages, he selected, from a number of ballads, one which their habits had rendered very popular among the gang, and which he adapted to that exquisitely passionate air which our tuneful fellow-countryman, Moore, has since graced with no less exquisitely passionate words. The reader, however, is requested to keep those out of

his recollection while he follows Mun through *The Lamentation of Ellen Maguare, or the Angler's deceit*—

"Phoo! where is at all for one song? Eh? —No—*The Red-haired Man's Wife*—the *Colleen Rue*—the —— Hah! you animal, you—will you be quite, there—Is it to ait me horse's collar *upon* her you mane, this evenen? You're like your own master, you tyrant, wanten to have uvury thing to yourself—*John M'Gouldrick's trial for the Quaker's Daughter*—and that's a moven song too, and a dale o' tinderniss and fine English in it,—how is this it goes?—hum! . . . .

My name is John M'Goulderick,
I never will deny—
They swore I was a Ribbinman
Condemned I was to die—
As soon as my dead letter came
My sorrows did renew—
Sayen, for to die
I do deny—
Brave boys, what shall I do?

There's a hole in the ballad—I'm not able for that at all, to-night—You won't let that sugan alone, again?—Sheela-na-Guira—A'then, joy be with you in a bottle o' moss, Mary, wherever you are this evenen, 'twas you that used to turn that, nate:—

I, tremblen, approached this beautiful dame—
And in great confusion I asked her name—
Was she Flora?
Aurora?
Or great Queen Demira?
Says she, I am neither—I'm Sheela-na-Guira.

Well, pass to the next—that's too moven; it puts me in mind of ould times and things, intirely—Oh, here it is, at last—'As I went—' —yes—oy—that's it—" [And clearing his voice by a "hem!" which made the neighbouring valleys ring, he commenced the *Lamentation* in a truly lamentable key, dwelling with a due degree of tremulous vehemence upon the semibreves, and prolonging the key-note from the ferocious, ear-piercing loudness of a trumpet,

to the buzzing indistinctness of the echo of an echo's echo.]

I.

As I went a walken one mornen in June
To view those gay flowers whin spreaden in bloom,
I spied a young faymale quite handsome and fair,
She had me enamoured—young Ellen Maguare.

II.

She far exceeds Phœbus—Luno, the moon—
Her breath is far sweeter than roses in June—
I have travelled this nation—I vow and declare,
Butt I never could aiquil young Ellen Maguare.

III.

At length I stept to her, and this I did say—
Your modest appearince has led me astray—
Both you and blind Cupid has me in a snare,
I hope you'll rilase me, young Ellen Maguare.

IV.

With this modest answer, then, she told her mind—
'If I could rilase you, I'd be well inclined—
'*My* heart is entangled, af you're in a snare—
'So that is your answer from Ellen Maguare.'

Gondoutha, wisha! And he murdered her after all the love—oy, indeed—

V.

Now I'll conclude and let you understand
May this be a warning to every young man!
To the lap-board of Sligo I straight must repair—
And die for the murder of Ellen ——

"Maguare," he would have said—or sung—had not the quatrain been cut short in a manner which seemed almost to threaten the vocalist with a fate similar to that of the unhappy heroine of his monody. This was neither more nor less than a well aimed blow, which took him on the middle of the crown and laid him sprawling, book and all, upon his face and hands in the very centre of the high road.

A thousand vague suspicions and surmises identified with the peculiar superstitions of the night—the power of the secret ministers of evil — the dark and sudden *pooca* — the wanton *Sheevrie*—the *sowlth* (bodiless spirit), or the *dhina-mauha—(good people)* as mischievously inclined, notwithstanding the concilia-

tory appellation which is given them, as any among the host of malicious spirits who are supposed to make holi*day* on those sacred vigils—and to be gifted with a power almost unlimited over all who, unprotected by the shield of a secure conscience, are found wandering at sunset in lonely places—a thousand surmises of this nature flashed in indistinct and hurrying masses upon the mind of the prostrate Maher, and, for a time, prevented him from lifting up his eyes, as he would very speedily have done under any other circumstances, to ascertain from what cause or with whom the aggression originated. His doubts on this subject, however, were solved by the sound of a shrill voice, the tones of which, though not heard during the lapse of many a long day before, were most familiar to his ear:—

"*Millia buehus—agus millia gloria!* you contrairy boy! have I found you at last? get up wit you, an coom along home wit me this minnit, I tell you, agin!"

Mun raised his eyes cautiously, and beheld, standing above him, with the fragment of an ashen bough in her hand, and the rosary transferred from that hand to her neck, the old woman to whom Suil Dhuv had been so civil when he met her in the glyn.

"Aih, mother, is that you that's there?"

"D'ye hear him for one rogue? 'Tis thin, I that's there—Get up an coom along wit me, now. Ah, you ingrateful rebel—you that I rared and cared for, and that I thought would be spreaden a bed in heaven for your old mother, yit—to go after sech coorses as them! —Whose horses are them you're houlden?"

"My own, and the Suil Dhuv."

"The Suil Dhuv!" the old woman exclaimed, dropping the bough, and clasping and wreathing her bony fingers in strong terror. "Oh, Mun, a boughleen dhown! is that the company you're keepen now, darlen?"

"What else would I be doen?"

"Stayen at home, to be sure, minden

the ould widowed mother, you thief o' the world—Look! Look over! Do you see that fort beyont, with the black hazels stirren upon the edges of it? and do you know what was done there? Eh—the gentle Heaven preserve us, may be 'tis to one o' themselves I'd be talken, this way!—Answer me, eroo, wor you one o' them that did that deed, in that place, that night?" and the old woman moved back from him with some distrust.

"Ax me no questions, mother—" said Mun, enjoying, for a moment, even the unenviable kind of superiority which the horrible suspicion of his worthy parent gave him—and affecting a degree of gloomy and mystical importance—"ax me no questions—an I'll tell you no stories.—There are some people in the world that are obliged, sometimes, to do things that other people arn't to know anythen about.—Do you think—" he added, bending on her one of his leader's dark glances—"do you think you are able to judge that deed,

whether it was good or bad? did you ever hear tell of the bunch of *loghero?*" [rushes.]

"The bunch o' loghero! eroo—" said the old widow, quite bewildered—

"Coom, sit down a-near me here on the ditch—an I tell you it while the Suil Dhuv is away. *Siedh shus!**—here. The moryil of it is that you arn't to say anythen is wrong whin you jedge be yourself, and can't for the life o' you see the inward meaning o' what's done. Listen to me.†

"A holy and a good man, but too much troubled with doubts, Father Dennis, was awoke in the middle of a dark December night by a great noise outside his window. He got up—threw open the shutters, and looking out, he saw two men, one of them

* Sit down.

† The moral of this fable bears so obvious a resemblance to that of Parnell's *Hermit*, that it does not seem extravagant to suppose (the poet's acquaintance with faëry lore taken into consideration) that it suggested the design of that fine performance.

striving to kill the other with a hatchet—and the other endeavouring to save himself as well as he could. Just as the Priest was going to cry out a thousand murders, he heard a heavy crash, and a groan, and then a great fall, and then there was a silence—so he knew all was over.

"He held his tongue, and waited to see what would become of the murderer. 'I shall now know to a certainty,' said the Priest, 'whether there is a Providence or no.'

"Opposite to the Priest's house was a sweet cottage tenanted by a young couple who had been married only a few months, and were the admiration of the whole village for their fondness. To this house he saw the murderer drag the body—he laid it near the cottage door, and placing the bloody hatchet on the breast, he went his ways.

"The Priest never returned to his bed that night, but stood at the window waiting for the daylight, to see what would become of the

murdered and the murderer.—'If there be a Providence,' says the Priest, 'the murderer surely shall not be suffered to escape.'

"Day broke—there was very little light—scarce so much as might serve to guide a man upon his road; for the moon and the stars had gone down, and it was long—long before sunrise. He saw the cottage door open—and the man of the house—a young, hale, handsome man came out. He stumbled over the dead body, and fell;—not knowing the cause, he was greatly surprised on rising, to find himself dabbled with blood—He startled and trembled from head to foot—stooped and touched the corpse, took the hatchet in his hand, and after making certain that the man was dead indeed—he ran towards the high road, scarcely knowing what he was about to do. At the gate he was met and hailed by a neighbour.

"'Ho! you're early rising this morning, Sir,' said the strange man—'where to, now?'

"'I'm going—I don't know—I want help—there's murder has been done.'

"'By whom? Not by you I hope—what brings the blood upon your vest and face—and what business have you (Lord save us!) with the bloody hatchet in your hands. Shew me the body. What? at your own door too? In the name of the great Lord, and of the king of the land, I take you a prisoner for this deed.'

"'Surely,' says the Priest—'if there be a Providence, this innocent man won't suffer for the deed he never shared in.' The young man was sent to gaol, and the Priest staid all that day praying in his own room, that if there was a Providence, it might be made known to him in that business.

"The next morning he was roused from his knees by a wild shrieking and clapping of hands in the street. He went again to the window, and he saw a young woman, fair and well formed, standing on the roadside, crying

bitterly, wringing her hands, and now and then looking, like one that is crazed, along the road, then giving a loud cry, and clapping her hands, and shaking her hair over her shoulders. Father Dennis looked along the road in the same direction, and he saw red coats, and horses prancing, and guns and swords glittering, and a crowd of people pressing round a *car*,* in which, after the whole procession came a little nearer, he saw, sitting, very pale—and looking now and then at the straw that covered the hangman near him—the young man of the cottage—his neighbour. Then the Priest started—and determined, before matters went farther, to put an end to the matter, by telling all he knew. He got up, and was about to leave his room, when he was struck senseless in a fit.

"When he came to himself, he saw one through the curtain of the bed sitting by him, and watching for him to wake. Supposing

* Cart.

that it was his clerk, he asked if the execution had passed.

"'It is over,' said the man; 'I saw the dead man with my own eyes.'

"'Then,' said the Priest, starting up in the bed, 'I have cast away half my life in prayers that were never heard—for *there is no Providence!*'

"'Take care how you say that too speedily,' said the man, drawing back the curtain, and looking him straight in the face. It was the murderer himself.

"Father Dennis felt his heart faint away within him; but he could not speak, neither was he able to deny the man, when he walked towards the door and bade him follow. He got up, put on his old hat, took his stick and his breviary in his hand, and away with him into the fields, the murderer still going before, and now and then beckoning him on, until they came to a lonely, quiet place, where there was a bunch of *loghero* growing in the middle of the fields.

"'Do you remember,' says the murderer, 'a young man of your parish that was spirited away into these wild places and never heard of after?'

"'The man was going to be married,' says Father Dennis, 'to the same young woman that is now a widow, mourning for the innocent man that was hanged yesterday.'

"'Did you mark how he started and trembled when he felt the blood upon his hands, and saw the bloody weapon? Take this spade and dig there?'

"The Priest put the spade into the earth, and turning up some loose sods, there he saw the body of the young man they were speaking of, as fresh as ever, with a deep gash on one side of the head.

"'Take the hatchet that is on the breast,' said the murderer.

"Father Dennis took the rusty hatchet, and there, sure enough, he found cut upon the

handle, the name of the man that had been hanged that morning.

"'There *is* a God then,' said a voice above his head, 'and a just and a good one.'

"Father Dennis looked round for the murderer, but he was no where to be seen, and there was no bush nor place where he could hide himself. At last, looking up, he saw, floating in the air above him, a glorious angel, with bright wings waving, and white garments flying, and a smile on his lips like the dawn of the May morning.

"'I am he that brought you here,' said the angel; 'Return to your house and believe. You can see now that your doubts were daring and guilty, and that it is not what man thinks evil that is evil in the sight of God.'— So that's the way wit you, you see, becase you can't see the rason why Segur should be murthered, an he dark, you think it must be wrong done, surely—Ha! what's that— murther! murther! how he runs! O they're

chasen him, surely—He's pinned, an we'll be all hung together on a string, like onions—Go along, mother, and hide yourself—Here he is, an they hunten him—"

"Who is it, Mun, eroo? Aih, darlen?"

"No matther—mother dear, run for your life—*sunuher** to me, (though that's no great curse) if you won't be kilt av you stop a minnit——"

"I'll not stir till you come along wit me now, Mun—"

"O, d'ye hear this? I'll go to you to-morrow —now—See! That I mightn't sin af I wont! I'll be at your table by the hob with the first light in the mornen, or else, may I never die in sin! That the two hands may go to the grave wit me av I don't—That the head may stick to me, now—murther! only see how he flies like a grayhound over the ditches—He'll be a-top o' you in a minnit—"

"Mun, I won't lave you now I have you,

* A good wife.

for I know it's the last that talks to you—it's them you'll be said by."

"O then, see this why!—What am I to do at all wit you, afther all the cursen! I tell you I'll not stop more than this night wit him, an isn't that enoogh?"

The old woman's answer was cut short by the arrival of Suil Dhuv, who bounded clear over the stile behind them, and seemed about to continue his headlong flight yet farther, when Mun laid hold on his arm.

"Ha! hold off! Who takes my arm?" he cried in a convulsion of fierce terror, while his eyes, staring and dilated, wandered over the person of his accomplice (scarcely less terrified), his hair stirred upon his forehead, which was pale as marble, although bathed in perspiration—"What—Maher? Where are the horses?"

"Here! Sir—What's the matter?—Are they after us?"

"They are! they are! O blessed night! I'm burning!"

"Who are they?"

"All that's evil, I think! Mount, and be off —Don't you see 'em—and hear 'em—and feel 'em?—*I* do, if you don't—There—there!" he added, dashing the chalice at Maher's feet, while the latter started back—"there's what they're all of 'em screeching after, and what I brought through the midst of 'em all—take it, you—and bring it along."

The old woman, at sight of the sacred cup, clasped her hands and uttered a scream of horror. Suil Dhuv looked upon, and instantly recognized her. At the same instant too, the recollection of her intended benediction, to which he had paid no attention at the moment when it was spoken, and which seemed to have been preserved hitherto in the mere avenues of the sense, now forced its way with all its original distinctness into the understanding,

and froze him with horror. "*May all that you do there be remembered to you at the day o' iudgmint, in the last o' the world, and through all eternity for ever!*" The solemnity of the anathema, the more fearful as it was innocently meant by the speaker, and seemed to be altogether the voice of Providence unconsciously transmitted to her, pealed with a stunning influence upon his heart and brain. That very innocency of intention, moreover, served only to increase his rage against the poor woman. He rushed furiously upon her, and would, most probably, have shook the unfortunate creature's bones "out of her garments," in spite of the vigorous resistance which was made by Maher, had not a new subject of alarm suddenly struck his sight. He relaxed his hands, which were clenched hard upon the throat of his accomplice, and remained for a moment silent, and staring fixedly over his shoulder, on the distant hills.

" Light he 's getten, surely," said Mun.

" A judgment from Heaven !" exclaimed his mother.

The Coiner continued gazing on the distance, and muttering, between his teeth—" Ay now—there 'tis—it's really coming now though —Look—look at all the fires breaking through the earth—Look !—Look !—"

Mun turned, and beheld indeed a sight which shewed him there was some ground for the wild words of the Coiner.—The mountains and the plains on all sides around them were lighted up with numberless fires—the red lustre of which, during the space of time consumed by their conversation, had supplanted that of the heavy evening sun.

" 'Tis the Eha-na-Shawn, sure," says the old woman.

" Is it St. John's fires you'd be wondheren at, that way ?" asked Maher.

Suil Dhuv paused a moment, breathed heavily—then sprung into the air, stamped both

feet against the ground—and shaking back his hair that was damp with perspiration—he snatched the reins of his horse and was mounted in an instant.

Maher was about to follow his example, when his mother bent forward and laid her hand entreatingly upon his arm. "Mun, Mun darlen! O Mun, a lanna ma chree!"

"To-morrow, mother—to-morrow mornen I'll be in my father's house agin, but I must be good to my word to-night—Take care o' the chalice, for I wouldn't touch it," said Maher, as he rode after his leader, the tramping of whose horse's hoofs were already heard in the distance.

"Heaven speed that morrow then!" exclaimed the old woman, clasping her hands once more, and turning up her old eyes in fervent prayer—"Heaven keep my child out of sin and blood this dreadful night!—Aih! see where they left the chalice, the two of 'em!" And plucking some dock-leaves, which she reverently wrapped

about the sacred vessel, taking care not to pollute the consecrated silver by her touch (an impiety from which it needed not the remembrance of the fate of Oza to warn her)—she carried it between her hands, with many a genuflection, and many a sigh, and many an "Allilu! O hone! mavrone!" to her own humble dwelling.

CHAPTER XI.

Thou hast left me, ever, Jamie—thou hast left me ever,
Thou hast left me ever, Jamie—thou hast left me ever.
Aften hast thou vowed that death only should us sever—
Now thou's left thy lass for aye—I maun see thee never.
Jamie!
I'll see thee never!—*Burns.*

The reader may possibly remember some allusions made in the early part of this narrative to a fair friend of Robert Kumba, whose name has afterward frequently occurred under circumstances which it was intended should be interesting—although the original construction of the history has rendered it difficult for

us to introduce the lady personally to his notice before the present moment. The story of her love and her disappointment is so brief, and at the same time (owing to peculiar circumstances in her disposition and education) so unfrequent, that we are sure of obtaining his indulgence if we venture to arrest, even in the zenith of its middle bound, the main action of the story, for the purpose of claiming for one, whose happiness or misery is most closely entangled in its results, that portion of his attention which she deserves, and which, we can assure him, she would be very unwilling to solicit for herself.

A clear, open forehead, beautifully rounded off beneath a cluster of that dark [*not* black] and shining hair, which is so general as to be almost characteristic amongst Munster maidens, and which parting easily in the centre of the forehead, formed a darkening semicircle on the pure marble of the slightly hollowed

temples, and fell in waving curls upon the shoulders—a fashion which was then very popular among those younger members of the gentle sex, whose years had not yet entitled them to the womanly honours of a *tête*—a masque of a full, yet delicate and tapering outline—and a chin sharp, sweet, and small as those which the great father of the English school of portrait painting seemed to look upon as the cestus of female, or at least of infantine beauty—dimpling to every smile, and scarcely inferior in expressive sweetness to the exquisitely curved and "wee bit" lips above it—a cheek which combined the mossy tenderness of the rose-bud, with the delicately vigorous hue of its expanded petals—a nose [it is an awkward feature to introduce into a mere description—but if ever there was a nose that looked well in prose or poetry, that nose was Lilly Byrne's] a nose then, we say fearlessly, which would have safely braved even the critical eye of that renowned Italian

magnate,* whose perception was so acute that he could observe a fault which in reality did not exist, and an improvement where in reality none had taken place, a fine, well-opened eye—over which the long quivering lashes played with an influence which at the same time tempered and heightened the fiery sweetness of the light-blue sparklers beneath them—teeth, convex, close set, and pearly—a neck and gorge which, as the curiously fanciful writer of Arcadia might have expressed it, formed the most delightful isthmus that could be wished for, between that lovely peninsula, her head, and that most fair continent her person—and which presented the most exquisite model that even *he* could desire, of that exquisitely delicate sharpness of outline which characterizes the most lady-like of Laurence's portraits; which is no lesse har acteristic of real elegance and gentle descent in the sex of

* The reader needs not to be reminded of the well-known anecdote of Angelo and his patron.

Lilly Byrne, than the curling hair and aquiline nose is in the other—and which, moreover, seems to depend on such a hair-breadth nicety of touch, that nothing less than absolute instinct or accident in the painter can enable him to accomplish it—round, yet narrow shoulders, which were connected by a fine conchoid with the slope of the neck, and from which the arms fell into a position of infinite ease and concord, confined by the closely fitted sleeve of the gown (as was the fashion of the time) as low down as the elbow, where the silk was cut out from the hollow of the arm, leaving a graceful lap over the softly rounded flexure, and suffering the remainder of the limb to continue revealed, in all its tapering softness—its elegant diminutiveness of wrist—its daintiness of finger—and polished convexity of nail (there is nothing like being particular), to the admiration of the beholder—unless, perhaps, on certain occasions when its

beauties were "covered, but not hid" by the mist-like shadowing of a half-handed silk net glove—a waist squeezed up into a cruelly delightful littleness, such as would have satisfied the charming Lady Mary Montague* herself—confined within a peaked body, which was on state occasions ornamented with a stomacher of small brilliants, and for the most part with the narrow riband work of the stays, which were left exposed by the opening of the gown in front, that sloped upward and revealed just so much of the white neck as was consistent with the feminine modesty of the period—and that was very little indeed (we don't mean the modesty, but the neck),—for

> Y que pues Hidalgas son,
> No solo no nos dên pechos,
> Pero ni pechos, ni espaldas :

was a prohibition more in favour with our fair Hibernian ancestors than among the heroines

* Vide one of her letters from Austria.

of *Las Armas de la Hermosura*—or we will dare to say, the young and beautiful of our own day:—a small foot, confined within a sharp-pointed, high-heeled, satin shoe, ornamented with rows of gold or silver spangles, and glancing from beneath the richly quilted green silk petticoat (to use an adaptation of Sir John's Suckling's celebrated simile), like little gold-finches, fluttering among the summer foliage of a sycamore—an ankle, the glossy whiteness of which was qualified, not concealed, by the thin, faint flesh-coloured checked silk stocking, and which formed the most perfectly finished termination in the world, to the classically large and easily fashioned person—these constituted the claims of Lilly Byrne to the title which was given her of the village beauty—and if, after all the pains we have been at in detailing them, the reader should refuse to have those claims allowed, we can only say that we wish him a better taste.

But the portrait which we have just presented, was that which a painter might have taken with advantage, when Lilly Byrne was younger and happier than she was on this day; when the hope of an authorized affection lived in her heart, and breathed in every movement of her frame;—when she loitered and listened with a cheek alternately flushing and whitening with the gentle tumultuousness of expectation, for the approach of her accepted lover, mistaking the creaking of the iron yard-gate for his pattering summons upon the brazen rapper of the hall door—nibbling her pretty lip in anger at the disappointment—glancing towards the window, and along the elevated lawn by which he was to approach—fidgetting and quarrelling with her work—talking of every thing but *the* subject—and blushing even to her fingers' ends, when she found herself detected in the midst of her manœuvres by the experienced eye of her mother, or the sudden, loud laugh of her

father, as their glances met—when the day was consumed between the lovers in those unmeaning words and actions, which, between lovers, have so deep a meaning—in jests which were laughed at, and were not worth being laughed at—and in those tantalizing annoyances, by which even the most sincere and the fondest among the gentle tyrants of the hours of courtship delight in manifesting their power over the great awkward fool who is lying at their feet—a power, indeed, which, considering how very short-lived it is in general, it would be an act of naughty supererogation to take from them—when light heart and merry word was the order of the day—when Lilly Byrne could do nothing for Robert Kumba, who was hiding her balls of cotton and her bobbin, and pulling the thread out of her needle—and Robert protested it was Lilly herself that was so idle—and mamma remonstrated, and wished that Mr. Robert Kumba would mind his own business—so she did—and

let her daughter mind hers—and Robert said Lilly was a spiteful little tell-tale—and the old gentleman said they were all a parcel of fools together—and—but if we say more, we shall come in for a share of the censure.

Few love-matches, commencing under circumstances so blameless, and so seeming-prosperous, were ever so suddenly deranged and overclouded as this was.

The affair proceeded far beyond that limit within which the *prospects*, at least, if not the feelings, of a girl may be said to remain secure. Those little privileges of address, which are not even allowed to the accepted lover, until all is believed to be as certain of accomplishment as if the ceremony had already passed, and which perhaps it were well for the peace and happiness of many a forsaken heart, to have altogether prohibited until the very possibility of disappointment had been removed, had been long accorded to Robert Kumba. The envied and (what was more) enviable

position by her side on all occasions—the solitary evening walk—the tête-à-tête in crowds—the certainty that he imparted pleasure while he whispered welcome nonsense in

"the soft labyrinth of the lady's ear,"

and a thousand other harmless intimacies which the memory of those who have been—the consciousness of those who are—and the imagination of those who wish to be, lovers, will save us the pains of recounting—were, for a long time, freely granted him:—and the consequence was, that he had at length become so completely wound up and entangled with all the joys, the sorrows, the hopes, and the fears of the young and ardent girl, that it would be as reasonable to look for the survival of her happiness after he, its heart, had been snatched from her—as to suppose that her material frame should continue uninjured in any of its functions, after the great organ of life had

been torn from her bosom. She died this moral death, however, for her lover *was* snatched from her—and so suddenly, that the ruin reached her spirit even before a single fear could prepare her for its approach. The manner of the "break off" was so strange and rapid—so utterly unlooked for—so startling and dream-like, that all was past and gone, before she could even imagine the possibility of her desolation.

The lovers had been taking their usual evening walk, and were occupying their usual position on the strait-backed, strait-armed, chintz-covered sofa (or settee, as it was then called), Lilly complaining pettishly of fatigue, while her lover untied the strings of her gipsy-fashioned white chip hat, and laid aside her scarf—while Mrs. Byrne sat knitting a gray worsted stocking by the clear turf fire, and a clean, sleek tortoise-shell cat sat on her knee, in that beautiful position for which it is almost

proverbially celebrated, purring its monotonous song of pleasure and contentment—and while Mr. Byrne, who had manifested a degree of reserve in his manner to Kumba throughout the evening, which was attributed by the latter to the accident of some disappointment in his farming affairs, continued walking slowly back and forward from the corner near the cupboard to the corner near the window, jingling a handful of half-pence behind his back, and humming the popular air, the burthen of which runs—

Dholinshin eruskeen, lawn, lawn, lawn,
Dholinshin eruskeen, lawn,
Dholinshin eruskeen
Slauntha gal ma voureen
*Bohunilum a cooleen dhuv no bawn.**

---

* "With this little vessel full, full, full!
With this little vessel full,
With this little vessel—
Here 's a white health, my little dear,
I don't care whether your hair is black or fair."

Is not this in the spirit of Sheridan's "Let the toast pass," &c.

On a sudden the old gentleman stopped short, and said,

"Robert Kumba, who were those people I saw on the grounds, over, to-day?"

Kumba let Lilly's hand go, and reddened slightly, with the angry consciousness of one who conceives that a "liberty" is about to be taken with him.

"They were—poh!—they were fellows from Mr. Rose, Sir."

"I thought so. Where are the little *vaugh* of black cattle that you were so proud of, that you had in the east meadow a week ago, Robert?"

"O then, I'm sure I don't know—they're gone, Sir," said Kumba, in increased displeasure.

"Sold?"

"Pho—yes—" with an impatient laugh.

"By you, Robert?"

"By the driver, Sir."

"I am very sorry to hear it. They were a great loss."

"O, I'm sure I don't want any body to tell me that. They wouldn't go if I could help it."

"Don't speak so impatiently, Robert, to your friends. 'Tis in kindness I speak, believe me. Your uncle James says that you *could* have helped it."

"My uncle James," said Kumba, vehemently, "never interferes in my business from any kind or generous motive. I wish he would spare his censures, since he can afford nothing else."

"I don't know but a timely censure may be a very good thing," said Mr. Byrne, in a fair and easy way; "and I should like to hear you shew that this was undeserved before you get into a passion about it."

"O, well, there has been enough about it now," said Kumba, turning to Lilly, whose agony during this scene may be well imagined —"Come, Lilly, will you play a game of chess?"

"Indeed, Sir, there has not been enough

about it," replied the father; "and I am determined to have a great deal more about it before *Miss Byrne* either plays chess, or plays the fool."

"*Miss* Byrne!" Kumba could not help echoing unconsciously, in a murmur of perfect astonishment.

"I give myself great blame," continued the old gentleman, his warmth gradually increasing as the subject became more fully developed, "that I did not take care to make myself aware much sooner of all the circumstances that I have heard to-day. Lilly, go to your room."

"Whatever you may have to say to me, Sir," said Kumba, taking Lilly's hand, which trembled in his, and smiling, though with a quivering lip, upon her—"may be said in *Miss Byrne's* presence. Our interests are single."

"Not yet, thank Heaven!—Do you hear me, madam?"

Lilly, who knew the extremities of anger which her father was capable of indulging, looked entreatingly towards her mother.

"Perhaps you were misinformed, my dear," interposed Mrs. Byrne, gently.

"I *was* misinformed, my dear," said her husband, passionately; "I *was* misinformed when I took a spendthrift and a prodigal into my house—a wasteful, extravagant wretch—(don't stop me, woman!)—that is sitting there now with his mouth open looking at me, after having squandered the beautiful property that was left him not four years since, and plunged himself over head and ears in debt, while I thought he was clearing off those left by his dead father."

Mrs. Byrne uttered an exclamation of surprise and dismay, and poor Lilly's heart sunk as low as if the whole world were forsaking her.

"You were much mistaken, Sir, if you supposed that it was ever my wish or intention to

avail myself of your ignorance on that head," said Kumba, *spiritedly*.

"I wish I had known that sooner," retorted the father.

"O, 'tis never too late for repentance, Sir," said Kumba, springing quickly from the sofa. "I permit no intermeddling in my affairs."

"Young man! . . . . " Mr. Byrne exclaimed —his aged brow flushing, and his frame trembling with anger—"but no—pish! no—" checking his anger by a violent effort—"this is not altogether my affair. Hear me, Sir. You shall not enter these doors again for six months. If during that time, you ——"

"O my good Sir, you deceive yourself very egregiously," said Kumba, with all the pride of voice and manner which he was capable of assuming—"my course, my conduct, my fortunes and my misfortunes are my own. You cannot point my way, Sir. Undeceive yourself, if you please."

"Very well said, Sir," replied the old gentleman, smiling and bowing—"you are your own master, and a fine scholar you have, Sir. But suppose I said your way lay there, Sir?" pointing to the door.

"I could find it without giving you the trouble, Sir," said Kumba.

"The sooner the better then, Sir," the father continued, smiling and bowing him out affectedly.

"As soon as I get my hat," said the other, snatching it at the same moment, with a degree of levity which though in accordance with all his character, the poor stupefied Lilly could not help feeling was unkind almost to heartlessness—and muttering, as he returned her father's ironical smiles, something about "the old man's *prudence*," and his own "misfortunes."

"Quit my house, ruffian!" the old man now broke forth in a paroxysm of fury, while his wife and daughter flung themselves with cries

of terror about his neck—" quit my house, ungrateful scoundrel that you are, or I'll fling you out of the window."

Kumba, perceiving at once all the impropriety of his conduct, used an action which seemed as though he wished to say something in extenuation, when he was prevented by Lilly, whose displeasure (for she *could* be displeased on occasion as well as another) had been strongly roused by the last insult to her parent.

" Begone, Sir !" she exclaimed, drawing up her head, with a tone and look of virtuous anger, before which Kumba's own pride crumbled into dust—" I did not know you until now. We want neither your presence nor your apology. *You* have deceived yourself, Sir, if you suppose that any interest you may possess in my affections can make me insensible to the duty I owe my father. How dared you, Sir," she continued, panting with agitation—" how could you use such coarse terms to my

father—and in my presence? Go, Sir, your apology can do little!"

In a few seconds the hall-door had closed on the rejected Kumba—while the old man gathered his daughter to his bosom with murmured praises and kisses of affectionate admiration. This access of tenderness, however, was the most injudicious course that could have been used in the present condition of our little heroine's feelings. It softened and let down the strings of her generous nature, and unhinged the proud consciousness of injury by which she had been sustained. She sunk from between his arms in a fit of convulsive grief, succeeded by fainting and by renewed hysterics, which it required all the usual expedients of ether, burnt feathers, and cold affusions, to subdue.

For many days after this occurrence had taken place, Lilly could not persuade herself that all was in reality at an end between her and her lover—and that the scene which she

had witnessed was other than a dream. All past so suddenly, so swiftly—so unexpectedly! She could not believe that the beautiful and glittering fabric which her young and sanguine heart had constructed with so much pains and self-gratulation, should thus, at the very point of its completion, be utterly hurried from her view, passing as rapidly as the rushing of a summer wind, and leaving no trace of its existence more evident than the dreary sound of its departing glory. She still listened while at her work for the knock of her lover—suffering under an agony, in which all the fever of protracted expectation was combined with the sullen and barren stillness of despair. Every approaching footstep startled her with a sudden hope, which was awakened only to be again struck lifeless by the pang of a disappointment quite as sudden.—Her parents no longer received from her that devoted attention which in the security of her youthful affection she had been accustomed to pay

them. When she knelt before them and bent her head to receive the parental benediction at morning and evening—the once sweetly murmured "Blessing, father,—mother, blessing!" was hurried over almost unconsciously; and the affectionate prayer of the old couple, that "God would bless her, and mark her to grace!" fell with the influence of an unmeaning sound upon her ear.—Her more secret devotions, too, were distracted and unsatisfactory. When she detected herself in the midst of a train of wandering reflections, it was in vain that she reproached herself, knelt more erect, clasped her hands more firmly, and attempted by gazing steadily upward to raise her thoughts above her own worldly interests, and still the unsettled throbbing of her heart, by striving to lay all its feelings at repose in the lap of a pious confidence. The form of Robert Kumba, with his angry, rude, and selfishly passionate look, would come floating on the eye of her me-

mory through the upper air, and then every word and action, no sound or gesture omitted, of the scene which had taken place would steal silently through her brain—her heart would swell and throb with a new tumult—to be followed by a new self-recollection—a new effort at resignation—and again a new distraction and a new distress. Her little domestic arrangements, also, were conducted with less care and diligence than formerly. The tortoise cat (before mentioned) had holiday times in the pantry, the door of which, notwithstanding all Mrs. Byrne's agonized remonstrances, was repeatedly left ajar—and the good lady was once heard solemnly to affirm, that she had found the animal actually lapping the milk at one side of the *peck* or *keeler** which Lilly was skimming at the other. The *full-bound* [firkin] of butter—home-made—which formed one of Lilly's own housekeeping

* Probably derived from the old English *Keel*, to cool—as in Shakspeare:—

"While greasy Joan doth *keel* the pot."

perquisites, remained unfilled, although the fair of Cork was fast approaching, and uncle Cuthbert, the grazier, had repeatedly offered to dispose of it along with his own, which was always first quality, because the butter taster was a particular friend of his; a series of advantages, the possibility of losing which made poor Mrs. Byrne's heart ache with apprehension.

Her daughter, however, continued to neglect the fair of Cork—her fine uncle—the full-bound—the tortoise-cat and the pantry-door, in spite of all her lectures. Her fits of abstraction and absent acts and words continued to grow and fasten the more upon her manner in proportion as they were observed—and her melancholy, which at no time presented violent symptoms, was silently wearing a channel in her heart, which deepened so rapidly, as, at length, to endanger the foundation of her health itself. "Dry sorrow baked her blood." She would frequently gaze for a long hour together upon

the sunny lawn before the windows of the house, with a fixed and tearless eye, absorbed in a fit of intense abstraction—from which, if roused by her mother after many unheeded calls, she would start (like one who had been surprised into slumber), with a thousand hurried apologies —— if by her father—with a sharp and peevish shortness of reply, which was most foreign to her character, and which made the old man's heart bleed.

She never wept—but very frequently, when passing to her room at night, she would pause in the middle of the long and narrow flagged hall—the candle elevated in one hand, while the other gathered her thin night-dress about her bosom—and remain motionless as a statue, her eyes rivetted on the ground, her lips parted as if in astonishment, and her whole being apparently suspended, for several minutes, until at length the conviction of her desolation came back upon her—and biting her nether lip while she uttered a low, tremulous, and murmuring

scream of anguish, she would rush along the passage to her own apartment, and fling herself on the bed in a passion of tearless grief, which wasted itself in short sobs, shiverings, and muttered sounds of suffering.

Mrs. Byrne could not "tell what to make" of all this. She could not form a conception of any ill affection of the frame which was connected with a positive disease—and though grief might possibly affect a young girl a little in the manner of Lilly's complaint, it could not possibly *be* grief, for Lilly cried a great deal less than she did herself. Her father seemed by his silence to understand the matter better —but, as he saw no remedy, he did not think there was any use in contesting the point—and held his peace therefore, when Mrs. Byrne, arguing from the hot and dry skin of the patient, pronounced a sentence of typhus fever (the plague of Ireland). Strange to say, nevertheless, although Mrs. Byrne was wrong in her premises, she was right in her con-

clusion——and her diagnostic was confirmed by the physician of the neighbouring village.

The old man was now really terrified. He loved—he doated on his daughter—and the actual conviction of her danger burst upon him with the influence of a sudden and deep misfortune. He would have given the whole farm, live stock and all, to hear that the doctor was wrong (and "sure" that would be no such miracle neither)—but the doctor in this instance was right—a typhus fever he pronounced the complaint—and a typhus fever poor Lilly had—a fever that wasted and sapped her brain, and brought her to the very gates of freedom. As the illness proceeded, and the doctor's face lengthened in sympathy with his bill, the old man's agony became absolutely phrenitic—he usurped the mother's place, and the mother's offices by the bedside of the sufferer—mixed the saline draughts, administered the medicine with his own hands—and

spent long nights in sleepless anxiety by her couch.

"I'll tell you what 'll come of it," the servants said to one another in the kitchen, "the poor darlen 'll die—Lord save her—an *himself* 'll be fit to be tied, with lightness, afther—that 'll be the way of it."

But like the good people of Islington, the rogues were out in their prognostic, for Lilly recovered of the fever—her robust father it was that died. We might be censured in these enlightened times, if we asserted that he took the fever from his nurseling; but it made little matter to poor Byrne whether the disease was contagious or no—for the fever he took, wherever he got it—and he died of it too—died after extorting—no—we do him and his daughter grievous wrong by using the word—after obtaining from Lilly a readily accorded promise that she would never receive Kumba again into her presence, until he had gained a place for himself in the estimation of those whose esteem

was worth his seeking—and until her mother should withdraw the interdict which *he* left upon his visits.

The reader may imagine what he pleases of the force of passion, and of female fickleness, and feebleness, and a great many other easily-mouthed phrases which are more fashionable, we suspect, in certain romances, than in human nature; but we can assure him that there are girls in the world upon whose perseverance and resolution a reliance might be placed as secure as that which one would repose on the firmness of a Mina or a Bolivar—in situations far more trying than any which those rude, rocky-hearted fellows could be tempted with—a resolution, too, a great deal more noble in its motive than theirs—for those gentle creatures do from duty, and even in violence to their natures, what a great rough man will do from pride, and the impulse of a ferocious and passionate temperament. While the one breasts the shock as sulkily as a rocky headland in a tempest—the

other yields and recoils alternately, blending the grace of submission with the dignity o self-assertion, like a willow in a swiftly gliding stream, seeming to droop and suffer itself to be hurried away by the torrent that has entrapped its boughs, while it clings with an easy determination to the bank where it has taken root. Lilly Byrne was just such a girl as we have described. Feeble in heart and frame as the feeblest of her sex, her conduct shewed as if the energy which had been stolen by long suffering from the latter, had been all transferred to her mind, and erected there into a tower of strength, against which all the assaults of feeling and still surviving affection (for love like hers could not be extinguished) were unavailingly though powerfully directed. Religion was her grand stay in those days of pining and of solitude.

Startled by the dangerous illness with which she had been visited, and touched by the restoration of her health, she had looked earnestly

from the interests of her heart to those of her soul, and had at length, after much self-examination, and prayer, and self-restraint, succeeded in obtaining the object of her exertions—that true religion which, by making all earthly affections subservient to the one eternal and divine, frees its votary from all possibility of an entanglement in the latter, which could be dangerous to his peace of mind (at least)—that true religion which, notwithstanding all the efforts of wit, and genius ill-directed, and learning ill-applied, has lain, and still continues to lie bedded amongst the instincts of the mighty heart of mankind, governing the tumultuous action of its passions, and sweetening through all its pulses—inspiring it with that finely ambitious love which, scorning to fix itself upon any of the *results* of nature, mounts at once to the First Cause as well as the centre of all beauty, as the object most worthy of it—and there lies sheltered with all its hopes, its pains, its sorrows, and its fears—

while the tempests of human evil roll in harmless murmurs to its feet, and the sunlight of human happiness is made more calm and sunny by the reflection of its smiles—that true religion which, far from steeling the tone of the heart to a philosophical indifference (as its calumniators say, while they mistake it for its ape, fanaticism), gives a keener edge to sympathy, a warmer pulse to moral feeling and affection—which bids the heart be hard to nothing but crime—cold to nothing but the suggestions of evil, and deaf to nothing but the call of selfishness—which presents the only and perfectly satisfactory solution that can be offered to that mighty enigma, the creation—and which can make a grander spectacle still than all the material wonders of that creation—a man, at least equal to the philosopher in moral goodness and in dignity of endurance—and superior to the philosopher in sublimity of motive.

Sorrow, however, had been beforehand with

piety in the heart of our little heroine—and though the latter re-conquered, or at all events contested the possession of the region with the spoiler, it could not repair the ravages which had been already made. The acuteness of the pang was blunted and made dull—and a sweetness was breathed upon the festering wound, that tempered and allayed its anguish; but neither the danger nor the suffering were removed—for religion, even such as hers, is a soother and paraclete—not a liberator; and the world would be no longer a place of probation, if it were otherwise. The last struggle which Lilly had to maintain against her own heart, was on the day on which Kumba, after suffering many months to pass away, without daring to intrude upon the grief of the family, requested (by a letter, addressed, with a delicacy of which he was very capable, and which Lilly appreciated at its full worth, to Mrs. Byrne)—to be permitted to visit them.

Lilly and her mother were both seated at the breakfast-table when the messenger entered with the note.

"A letter that one left for you, Ma'am."

"From whom, James?—give it me," said Mrs. Byrne.

The servant approached, watching the eyes of "the young missiz," and availing himself of every moment when they were turned from him, to communicate, by a hundred cautionary grimaces, gestures, winks, jerks of the head, dilations of the eyes and mouth, and other strange contortions, some indication of the nature of its contents. Mrs. Byrne, however, was not sufficiently quick of apprehension.

"What do you mean, James? Why *don't* you give me the letter?"

"Bekays he toult me—to—you know—" [turning his back towards Lilly, and pointing his thumb slily over his shoulder, while his eyes seemed to reverse themselves in their sockets]—"he did, indeed."

"Well, you are the querest man that ever lived. He did *what?* Who *did?*"

"Mr. Kumba did!" thundered the man, exasperated beyond all patience, "Roberth Kumba, sence I can't make you see it—that's what he did. There's no use in talking!" he added, grumbling, as he tossed the letter carelessly on the breakfast table, and turned to depart.

Lilly did not start—nor break a tea-cup—nor scream—nor perform any other of those antics of astonishment which perhaps those of my fair readers, who are versed in the stage-business of romance, might have expected from her.

More quick of eye and apprehension than her mother, she had formed a just conjecture on the subject, from the moment she beheld the servant's caution, on entering the room—and Mrs. Byrne, had she looked towards her daughter, might have seen in her flushed and whitening forehead—her trembling lip—and

straining bosom—that which would have saved her the trouble of asking so many questions—and the sin of putting James in a passion.

"It is from Robert, indeed," said Mrs. Byrne, looking for her spectacles—"who brought it, James?"

"I'll tell you that, thin, Ma'am," said James, turning suddenly round, and forgetting all his anger in the interest of the new question. "I'll tell you all about that," he repeated in a soft tone, as if fearful of being overheard—then bending his person, and stretching his head to the furthest limit that his neck (as coarse, and almost as long, as a cable) would permit—while he still held the handle of the door behind his back—"I'll tell you that," he once more repeated, hushing the tone of his voice into a whisper that was all but inaudible—"*himself*, no less!"—and then, confirming by a nod the truth of what he alleged, he suddenly drew himself up to his full height,

and stared as if in sympathy with the astonishment he had excited.

"My goodness!" exclaimed both the ladies.

"'Iss, indeed," James continued, gathering his hands together under the skirt of his coat, and renewing his nod of emphatic assertion.

"And is he below, James?" inquired Mrs. Byrne.

"Oh, below! what below, Ma'am?" said James, his head recoiling with a tone and action of remonstrance and astonishment—"Is it into the house he'd come? No, indeed. But I'll tell you what," he added, walking a few paces further into the centre of the room—placing his *cauboge* [old hat] upon a chair, looking fixedly in the eyes of his auditors, and throwing his disencumbered arms out from his shoulders, as if preparing for a regular oration. "Here's the way it was. Goen to the ford, over, I was, this mornen, to water the little filly-foal, the same

that Miss Lilly, there, used to be riden, whin she'd be along with *him*—(and a good warrant you had at it, too, Miss," he interpolated by way of parenthesis, while he grinned at Lilly) —"an I trotten along, thinken o' nothen, along the road, whin all of a suddent, I felt a great change comen in the baste under me. Oh, sarrow word of a lie I'm tellen. Lord save us! says I, is it any then bad that's there? and hardly the word was out o' me mouth, whin 'James!' says he, above upon the hedge. Oh, it's fact. 'James!' says he, on the hedge. Lord, between us and harm, says I, who is it that callen me? says I. 'Don't you know me, James?' says he again; Mr. Kumba, indeed, he did. Aw thin, Sur, says I, is that you? ''Tis indeed, James,' says he. So we stopped a minute, looken at one another. Why thin, it's a long while since I seen you, now, Sir, says I. He made me no answer to that, but after a while, 'James,'

says he, 'I'm sorry for your *trouble*,* westwards.' Heaven's will be done, Sir, says I, you need'nt tell me that, an sure 'twas true for me, Ma'am—for—" looking all round the room for an illustration—" see, 'twas as pale as this table cloth, his face was—and his eyes sunk in in his head, within, an his cheeks all gone, intirely. He looked, you'd think, *as if he was'nt there at all*, you'd think, a' most. Not, but," he added, on meeting Lilly's eye—" he's greatly improved from what he was, I'm told, and thriving again very fast—but still an all 'twould make the stones weep to look at him. 'Well, James, is'nt it greatly they wouldn't let me come a near 'em, at all,' says he, 'an my heart bleeden to hear about *it*.' He did, indeed, Miss. Sir, says I, sarious, this way—I never spake o' the famaly, says I—but there never was a smoke without a fire yet—an beg-

* A favorite phrase of condolence among the peasantry, on the loss of any member of a family.

ging your pardon, says I, may be, if you behaved honester [i. e. more mildly] whin you were there, you'd have the liberty o' the place to day, says I, the same as ever.—'Why then, I believe it's true *for* you, James,' says he —and then he *con*tinued moven unaisy about for a *few* minutes, like one that would have somethen on his mind, you'd think; an at last, 'James,' says he, 'would you do me a favour now—an I'll do as much for you another time,' says he. If you never did any thing for me, Sir, says I, I'll do it and welcome, and I would too, Ma'am. With that, he put it into my hand—the letter—he did, and says he, 'Don't let your young missiz see you given of it, James,' says he—'an I'll wait here,' says he, 'until such time as you bring me an answer—and don't delay it, James, if you can, for my heart is within in it,' says he. He did indeed. Signs on, see the state I'm in, racen hether wit it," he continued, pressing his open hand upon his brow, and wiping

away some drops of perspiration—"an there he is, waiting this way, over, in the sally-grove —seeing would he get a favourable answer to the *pett*ition." And having graced his peroration with a suitable gesture, James took up his hat again, and remained silent, looking alternately into the eyes of both his auditors, as if to observe the effect of his narrative.

"He has taken the proper course, at all events," said the old lady, shewing the superscription—*To* Mrs. *Byrne,* Drumscanlon—to her daughter.

Lilly did not answer—but her glowing cheek and brightening eye shewed that her mother's observation was not lost upon her.

"Am I to wait for the commands below, Ma'am?" said James—an innate sense of delicacy (a quality which even the humblest of the Irish possess to a great degree, in common with all people of strong feelings) informing him that, although they had forgotten his

presence, it could not but be an incumbrance at the present moment.

" You may, James," said Mrs. Byrne, " but don't be out o' the way."

" Is it *I* be out o' the way, Ma'am !" James murmured in surprise as he left the room.

They proceeded to examine the contents of the letter.

CHAPTER XII.

Pisanio.—Madam, here is a letter from my lord.
Imogen.—Who ? Thy lord ? that is my lord—
O learned indeed were that astronomer
That knew the stars as I his character,
He'd lay the future open.

Cymbeline.

It is most extraordinary to observe how completely—how utterly, as age grows upon us, we lose sight of all the lesser feelings and sympathies of our youth—how perfectly incapable we become of entering into all the fineries of our early condition of mind and heart, when re-acted in our presence by those to whom

they have descended. With all Lilly's patience, she could not help wondering at the comparatively uninterested way in which her mother proceeded to wipe her spectacles, drive her old friend the tortoise-shell cat from her knee, examine the seal, and smile at the device and motto, a crucible, with "Swift yet sure" beneath, the popular allusion of which she readily understood, before she gratified the longing ears and eyes of Lilly with a disclosure of the contents.—Kumba spoke truly when he told James that his heart was in it—and certainly, if mere words *ought* to have made way with the widow and her child, the appeal which it contained would not have been unsuccessful.

"I only wish, my dear Mrs. Byrne," he continued, after having made his object known in a very sensible and yet feeling manner—"I only wish that you would give me an opportunity of shewing you that the great impropriety of conduct (to say the least of it)

—of which I was guilty in your presence, was not the effect of habitual but accidental ill-temper. It was an occasion which I cannot think on without grief and humiliation, but when you agree with me in reprehending it, do not forget, my dear madam, I beseech you, the sufferings which it has already brought upon me.

"To your feelings, as a mother, I appeal for some indication of what those sufferings must have been. Consider how you would have felt, if any circumstances had excluded you from the sick chamber, and the bedside of your daughter—your only child, whom you love so tenderly, when she lay in a dangerous illness—and think whether even the absolute necessity of those circumstances, and their being unmerited by any act of yours, would be sufficient to reconcile you to the privation. If not, my dear madam, what must have been the torture of my heart, when I had to endure a similar banishment, and had not even that

ineffectual resource of a secure conscience to comfort my heart—when I heard, hour after hour, of some new grief, some new calamity befalling her in whose happiness all mine was centred; and yet could not but acknowledge that you were all acting right in shutting me out from her presence, and that the suffering which I deplored, and the agony which I felt, was all the work of my own hands—that I had been the cause of my own rejection from the paradise I sought—the cause of my poor, gentle, but justly indignant Lilly's illness—of your displeasure—of—— Oh, madam, even while I write, the stinging of my own heart tells me that I have done *too* much, and that I ought not to be heard.

"Nevertheless, I send the letter as I have written it. If I should be still doomed to suffer for that unhappy morning, however dreadful my life may become to me, be assured that never even in thought will I entertain the suspicion that I have any thing to blame but

my own unprovoked and wanton rudeness for my misery.

"ROBERT KUMBA."

Mrs. Byrne slowly folded the letter, and remained, meditating for a moment, while she endeavoured to make the bowl of a tea-spoon float in her cup.

Lilly, whose countenance had changed almost as many times as there were sentences in the letter, during its perusal, remained anxiously expecting the speech of her mother. She had, during the early part, manifested a degree of warmth and approbation (in her look and manner only), which, had Kumba beheld her at the moment, would have put him in fine spirits—but before her mother stopped reading, the expression of her face had altered. The tears, which his allusion to her own illness had brought into her eyes, were checked upon the lids, the glow on her cheek became fainter, the panting hope that

struggled in her bosom appeared to subside, and a slight degree of chagrin and of disappointment was manifest upon her brow and lip.

"It is a very *nice* letter, my dear," said Mrs. Byrne, "but it does not contain all that we want to know. I believe we always gave him credit for feeling—but why does he not mention anything of the farm all this while?"

"The reason appears to be, mother, that he has mistaken our motives altogether. Surely neither you nor I, nor—any body else—ever could have intended to make that unfortunate fit of passion a cause for utter *banishment*, as he calls it. My poor dead father was not so inveterate. He even attributed a great portion of the blame on that morning to himself."

"Ah, my dear, your poor father was a great deal too forgiving—Heaven forgive *me* for saying so—I mean for his own worldly interests—but I thank Heaven he was so—for if

it were otherwise he could not have hoped for the reward that, I trust, he is now enjoying."

"Neither ought Robert to suppose that he has had all the suffering to himself," said Lilly, while she strove to keep herself from crying.

"You are very right, my love," replied Mrs. Byrne, turning emphatically towards her, "and *that* is very selfish of him, to say so, certainly."

Lilly meant only the internal suffering to both, consequent on their separation—but the matter-of-fact old lady took it for granted that so strong a word would only be used with application to the physical calamities of all parties, and Lilly was too timid and delicate to explain —so that the undeserved censure was suffered to remain upon poor Kumba's shoulders.

These are the mistakes that set the world by the ears.

After some farther conversation, it was agreed that Mrs. Byrne should answer Ro-

bert's letter—or *pettition*, as James called it—by undeceiving him with respect to the cause of his exile—laying down the condition of his recall, which was to be such an improvement in the circumstances of his property and his conduct as would suffice to justify a reasonable hope of his perseverance; and, finally, a friendly exhortation to him, that he would make an exertion to restore to all as much as yet remained on earth of the peace which they had lost.

"Mother!" said Miss Byrne, as she was about to leave the room—"you will tell him I had not forgotten him." And having with difficulty restrained herself while she uttered the sentence, she hurried away to relieve her heart in the solitude of her own apartment.

By another of those *contre-tems*, which, however slight in themselves, yet involve so deep and very often tragical consequences in the history of the human heart, it unfortunately happened, that Mrs. Byrne (who, as my readers may before now have conjectured,

was not one of those persons who can think of one thing and attend to another at the same time) was, at the very moment when Lilly spoke, absorbed in the consideration whether she should address the letter "My Dear Sir," or "My Dear Robert," and never heard, and, consequently, never gave, Lilly's remembrance. The letter wanted it too—(which was worse and worse)—for the precise, good-natured lady took so much pains to communicate every thing in so very *proper* terms, in so neat a hand, and with so many almost invisible erasures—nicely polished over with the finger-nail (so as that the ink should not sink)—and other pretty precautions, that poor Kumba, when he got it, felt as if he had walked unawares under a waterfall.

He might, perhaps, have yet received enough of encouragement to stimulate him to some exertion, if he had known how often Lilly wept upon her mother's neck in the course of that and the following day. But

there was nothing to alleviate the coldness of the letter, which indeed would have been perceptible to a person composed of much less combustible and enthusiastic materials than himself. The effect which it did produce on him we have already seen, and the accounts which reached the inmates of Drumscanlon of his excesses, contributed more effectually than all she had before endured, to shatter the feeble remains of Lilly's constitution, to render her more assiduous in all her duties, more silent, more resigned, more woe-worn, more gentle and timid, more smiling, more cheerful, and more broken-hearted.*

One of the principal of these last, was a ceremony which the innovations of modern

* The last word may startle many of those readers who (as is the fashion at present) look for good sense and truth in novels —more especially as one of the most popular modern writers of this class has pronounced the phrase a vulgar error. He is mistaken, however. Dr. Farre, among the many discoveries relative to this delicate organ with which he has enlightened the world, has proved that a broken heart may be, and has been, a mechanical effect of grief.

custom has restricted altogether to the humble classes of Irish life. Every morning, before any part of her household affairs were permitted to obtrude themselves upon her attention, she walked to an old church, about a "small mile" from her own residence, for the purpose of "paying a round," that is to say, offering up, on her knees, a few prayers for the repose of the spirit of him who was sleeping beneath the mound, of soliciting an increase of strength to abide by the resolution she had formed, and commemorating the sacrifice she had made of her own feelings and happiness to his dying wishes. An accident, which occurred during one of those morning excurtions, occasioned the conversation which took place between Kumba and the Suil Dhuv on sheir first introduction to the reader.

Lilly had been, a few mornings previous to the day on which the old Palatine arrived at the inn upon the mountains, kneeling, as usual, in the morning sunshine, at the foot of her

father's grave, her hands clasped, and her head bowed down in pious reverence, when she was startled by hearing the ivy rustle upon the low and ruined wall beside her. Raising her eyes quickly, and in some alarm, she beheld the face of a man, whom she recognized as an occasional labourer of her father's, staring in upon her devotions with some expression of surprise and compassion.

"Whisht! whisht, Miss!" he exclaimed, waving his hand to her, as if to signify that she should not regard his presence.

"How did you know that I was here, Jerry? Were you sent for me?" said Lilly, rising from her knees.

"O no, Miss—not I—but—" observing her eyes red from weeping—"you oughtn't to do that all, Miss. *He* wouldn't like it."

"Why so?"

"'Tisn't *good*, Miss. I knew meself of a time, a lone woman, a widow, that used to be goen that way every day to cry over her son

that was buried in the church-yard—an at last, you see, one day as she was kneeling that way, an claspen her hands, and *ochone-ing* over the grave, she hard somethen above her, upon the wall, as it might be this way as I am now—and sure, what should be there but himself. 'Ah then, darlen,' says she, 'is that you, Mike? Lord save us!' 'E'then it is so, mother,' says he, 'and don't do that any more,' says he.—'Oh then, what for shouldn't I cry over you, Mike, darlen?' says she, looken at him. 'No, don't, mother,' says he, 'for it's well I suffered to you for all you cried already. Look here!' says he, liften up the winden-sheet that was upon him, and shewen her his side all full of little holes.* 'There's one of them,' says he, 'for every tear you shed for me,' says he, 'and don't do it any more upon me, mother,' says he. 'No, I won't, indeed, Mike,' says the poor woman, dryen her eyes

* This is a common superstition frequently used in the hours of condolence.

at once—'Don't, thin,' says he agen, an he vanishen. An she didn't either."

"Well, I thank you for the advice, Jerry, but I will thank you still more, if you will not say a word of your having seen me here, to any body."

"Is it I say a word of it?" said Jerry O'Gilvy, indignantly.

He did say a word of it, however, and two words; and this circumstance it was which induced Suil Dhuv to suggest to his dupe, Kumba, the idea of meeting Lilly at the place to which Jerry would conduct him, a grove lying on her road home from the church-yard; the latter being strictly cautioned by the Coiner not to make the young man aware of the object of her morning walk, for he had penetration enough to know that Kumba's feeling, if not his principle, would never permit him to disturb her on such a mission,—indeed we might say his common sense, for, however much he trusted to the effect which he might

be enabled to produce on Lilly's resolution in a personal interview, he could expect nothing less than an indignant and final repulse to such an attempt as the present. Neither would it have answered the views of Suil Dhuv that they *should* meet, or that Kumba should in any way succeed in his wishes. It was enough for him to have acquired an additional influence over the mind of the latter, by making the proposition—he was not by any means so anxious as his friend imagined, that it should proceed to a satisfactory accomplishment. This, however, was sufficiently provided against, by a slight circumstance which took place the very evening before. An anonymous note directed to Miss Byrne, and informing her in two lines of Kumba's design, which was left at Drumscanlon, not only filled her with indignation, but effectually confined her to the house, while Kumba and his *chaperon* Jerry beat about the grove until noon, in vain. The note was left at the kitchen door, by a

thin, sharp-faced, and bare-footed lad, who neither made nor answered inquiries, and of whose mission James could collect no farther indication than that he spoke in a half-*English* way about "dis, an dat, and de oder ting."

Thus circumstances stood at Drumscanlon, on the day preceding that which was destined to involve, in so singular a conjuncture, the fortunes of so many characters in our history.

CHAPTER XIII.

Brabantio.—My daughter, O my daughter!
Senators.—Dead?
Brabantio.—To me.
She is stolen from me!—

Othello.

The day following was (as the reader has already been made aware) the Eha-na-Shaun, or the Eve of St. John's Day, a festival which is celebrated in Ireland with peculiar devotion. The people have a number of traditions current among them, relative to the origin of many of the ceremonies peculiar to this Vigil (one of the most remarkable of which latter is, the lighting up of fires on the mountains, and indeed in all parts of the country about even-

fall—the appearance of which on this night, occasioned so much terror to the Coiner). It is believed by some, that the ceremony is nothing more than a relic of the idolatrous worship of the Aborigines of the soil—while a greater number of the peasantry suppose that they commemorate by those nocturnal illuminations, a general massacre of the ancient enemies of the land, the unfortunate Danes, who were (as the cottage historians assert) all slaughtered one fine summer evening (the signal for the general uprising of the oppressed natives being a number of beacon fires, lighted on every hill, hillock, mount, and mountain throughout the country)—and who have left no other memorial of their dearly purchased conquest in this still unsubdued, though often conquered island—than the ruined *lish*, or fort, through whose woody covering the night wind sighs above their bones—or the mouldered and almost rust-eaten coin that is thrown up by the *blaster* or quarrier in the lonely regions of

the inland—to furnish matter of speculation to some pantalooned and spectacled antiquarian of the R. I. A.—or Dublin society.

The fires had already been lighted on the fields adjacent to Drumscanlon, when Lilly Byrne, having discharged, as was her never-failing custom, all her household duties to the very letter—given the servants their dinner—cut out the slim-cake for the evening—set some milk in a saucer for the cat—counted all the linen into the press—seen the ducks, hens, and chickens fed—the cows milked—the dairy set in order—the garden-gate locked—the butter printed—the mouse-traps baited—and the dough set by the fire—when Lilly Byrne, having discharged, we say, all those duties, sat in her chamber making her little preparations with an aching heart, at her toilet, to perform a cheerful part among a small family tea-party, who were invited to spend the evening at Drumscanlon.

Poor Lilly's toilet was not now a matter of

very excessive labour or concern to her. She was careful to admit nothing in the adjustment of her dress (a simple suit of mourning) which the general custom of the time rendered absolutely necessary to prevent the appearance of affectation or a disrespectful singularity—but no adornment that a positive feeling of duty did not point out to her, was any longer used. Human motive was now fatally quelled within her bosom, and she no longer felt those little struggles between her love for things "lawful though dangerous," and her fears of secret vanity, which had given rise to nearly all the trials of her girlish virtue, when there *was* a reason why she should look to good advantage in other eyes than her own. She rejected, therefore, the fine jet necklace which her mother had left upon her table, and contented herself with the plain silk riband and black cross which lay near it, in one of the little recesses of her dressing-box.

In loitering among the now neglected trin-

kets which were thrown together in the casket, she removed a piece of paper, folded, and marked on the outside in her own handwriting (as if by way of index to the contents) with the initials R. K.—Those contents were a song adapted by her lover to one of the old ballad airs of the country, which Lilly had often sung to her harpsichord (when the young gentleman was *not* present—for she was far too scrupulous to flatter his vanity at any time by letting him hear how she honoured it)—and which, as Lilly *did* think it worth singing, we shall venture to transcribe:—

THE WANDERER'S RETURN.

I.

I've come unto my home again and find myself alone—
The friends I left in quiet there are perished all and gone—
My father's house is tenantless—my early loves lie low!
But one remains of all that made my youthful spirit glow—
My love lies by the blushing West, drest in a robe of green,
And pleasant waters sing to her and know her for their queen:
The wild winds fan her face, that o'er the distant billows come—
She is my last remaining love—my own—my island home.

II.

I know I've not the cunning got to tell the love I feel,
And few give timid truth the faith they yield to seeming zeal.
The friends who loved me, thought me cold, and fell off one by one,
And left me in my solitude to live and love alone.
But each pleasant grove of thine, my love, and stream, my fervour know—
For there is no distrusting glance to meet and check its flow—
To every dell I freely tell my thoughts, where'er I roam,
How dear thou art to this lorn heart, my own, my island home!

III.

And when I lift my voice and sing unto thy silent shades,
And echo wakens merrily in all thy drowsy glades,
There's not a rill—a vale—a hill—a wild wood or still grove,
But gives again the burning strain, and yields me love for love—
Oh, I have seen the maiden of my bosom pine and die—
And I have seen my bosom friend look on me doubtingly—
And long—O long—have all my young affections found a tomb—
Yet thou art all in all to me, my own, my island home!

IV.

And now I bring a weary thing—a withered heart to thee—
To lay me down upon thy breast and die there quietly—
I've wandered o'er—O, many a shore, to die this death at last—
And my soul is glad—its wish is gained, and all my toils are past—

Oh, take me to thy bosom then, and let the spot of earth
Receive the wanderer to his rest, that gave the wanderer birth—
And the stream, beside whose gentle tide a child I loved to roam—
Now pour its wave along my grave, my narrow island home!

The recollection of the circumstances under which Kumba had placed these verses in her hands, threw Lilly into a train of feeling which would have been dangerous to her resolution of meeting her mother's friends with a gay spirit becoming the occasion—had not her meditations been interrupted by the slight pressure of that mother's hand upon her neck, as she leaned forward in her chair :—

"Well, Lilly, my love, will you not come down. The company are waiting, and Mrs. Hasset has been asking for you no less than three times. What! you have been crying again, I declare! Well, then! O then, to be sure, now, Lilly!"

"Ah, mother, do not blame me. It is not for the Robert Kumba that is now wholly abandoned to low courses, I weep, but for

him who was so kind, so generous, so amiable, so feeling!—Do not think that any degree either of hope or of discontent mingles with my regret. I look upon myself, on the contrary, as one who has been providentially delivered from a veiled and certain danger. Neither," she added, as she observed her mother's eyes glisten and fill—"neither have I given up all hope even of this world's happiness. Can it be criminal, mother, in me to suffer such a hope to mingle with those which are fixed where they cannot change or darken? Was it criminal in me, just now, when I knelt before the Almighty, to offer up a tear and a prayer for *him;* and to indulge the belief (illusive perhaps) that even at that moment my sorrow might have found its way to the throne of Heaven—and that some single pang, some misfortune, some threatened danger, might have been spared to my once-loved friend in mercy to my agony?

The reader, who has accompanied Kumba through the events of this day, might per-

haps have told Lilly a secret on this subject.

"I will own, mother," she continued, after a pause, while the afflicted old lady endeavoured by caresses and entreaties to console her, "that it cost me some struggles, and was a long while before I brought myself to make the sacrifice *of* myself entirely thus—and if I do not deceive my own heart—if indeed it *is* made, I have no merit in it—for it seems to me to be only the pressure of repeated disappointments in my fondest wishes, that has at last conquered my obstinate will. You think me melancholy, now, mother," she added, smiling with real cheerfulness, as she looked into the eyes of her parent, "but indeed I am not. I do not—" she continued, smiling yet more gaily, and hesitating a little, while she laid her finger on a borrowed volume of the letters of a celebrated and titled authoress, which were then creating a general sensation in England (a sensation that time has little

diminished)—"I do not, at present at least, feel that mortification which this lady expresses at growing wiser every day and seeing, like Solomon, the vanity of all temporal concerns. And is not that a great deal? Come, mother, you shall see that I can be happy in spite of my own peevish wishes," and passing her handkerchief over her thin, white, and wasted, but light and pleasant countenance, she paused one moment with clasped hands on the threshold of the door, and moved her lips as if to solicit an increase of contentment and resignation; after which she breathed one short sigh as a last tribute to the dominion of melancholy for that evening, and quietly followed her mother.

One very brief but painful struggle only she had to endure, when first the sounds of merriment broke upon her now unaccustomed ear. It was the first time that any number of friends (for relatives only, and those a few, were invited) had met in that apartment since

those two dear ones had been lost to the circle. Another vigorous exertion, however, enabled our little heroine to recover her self-possession.

There are few trials which the resigned spirit has to encounter, more distressing than to find its fortitude mistaken for real, positive happiness. Those who feel their constitution sapped and shaken by some chronic disease, know how dreary a thing it is to be congratulated by a friend on their good looks—clapped on the shoulder—and told that they are better than ever they were in their life; while the secret malady is silently eating away the foundation of their existence within, and reminding them perhaps, at the very instant that they make a ghastly effort to correspond with the gay and smiling countenance of their well-wisher—reminding them, by a new pang, of the deadly certainty of their doom. Although Lilly Byrne had long since compelled herself to refrain in all instances from any act,

word, or look, which had no other object than that of attracting pity to her sufferings (contenting herself according to the precept of her religion, with having the Being that visited her with these for their only witness)—still she could not help feeling a certain blank and dismal solitariness of spirit when her friends all rose and crowded round her as she entered, smiling, pressing her hand, and congratulating her on her merry looks—when Mrs. Hasset, a rather subordinate relative of the family, took her seat in Robert Kumba's old place, on the chintz-covered settee, and laughed, and shook her head, and "knew it would not last, so she did!" "Time did wonders," the old lady slily insinuated; and though it was very true that—

> "Love is longer than the way,
> Love is deeper than the sea;"

yet even the sea itself would run dry at last if the rivers were cut off—and it would be a very long way indeed, that did not come to an

end or a *turning*, at any rate [this word was pronounced with a very roguish emphasis] at some time or another. Lilly would forget it all before she was twice married. There was Mrs. Blaney, mother to the Blaneys of the Hill, some of whom were there, sitting opposite her—who went on *just in the same way as Lilly*, when she was *slighted* by her first lover; nobody thought she'd ever recover again, and see there she was now, the mother of a set of fine young men, as any in the three counties; and the grandmother of that little fat girl that sat, looking shyly round upon the company. So let Lilly not be *down* about it—for she had only to set her cap at the right side of her head, to win a better offer than she had lost *the last trick*.

Although Lilly endured all this martyrdom without a single look or even wilful thought of impatience, we should accord her a degree of fortitude, perhaps beyond the reach of sympathy or truth, if we said that she did not feel

inexpressibly relieved when the entrance of the tea diverted the worthy Mrs. Hassett's attention from her and her sorrows. While the good lady was occupied in bestowing her admiration on the transparency of the immense china bowl—the delicacy and shortness of the slim-cake—discussing the respective merits of the Cork and Limerick groceries—(Uncle Cuthbert and herself having always a dispute on this subject whenever they met)—and deploring the economy of some neighbouring family who never brought out tea to their visitors at luncheon—a practice which the novelty of the beverage in those days made fashionable in the country parts of Ireland—Lilly stole off to a group of grown girls who were gathered around the little Blaney above mentioned, some on their knees before her—others leaning on the back of her chair, and all joining in a request that she would give them a song.

When Lilly Byrne approached her she looked with a timid smile from beneath her

brows, and said—"I'll sing if you bid me, I will."

"I do, then, my little darling," said Lilly, kissing her.

The girl then plucked up courage, and chanted with a tremulous little pipe, a piece of nursery namby-pamby, which ran as follows:—

I.

What are little boys made of—made of?
What are little boys made of?
Of snips and snails
And puppy dogs' tails—
That's what little boys are made of.

II.

What are little girls made of—made of?
What are little girls made of?
Of sugar and spice,
And all that's nice—
That's what little girls are made of.

Before the murmurs of approbation and encouragement had subsided—and while Mrs. Hassett was *declaring* that the wee songstress had a fine clear voice and a very good ear,

and ought not to be neglected—the latter ran over to Lilly, and throwing herself into her lap, looked up in her eyes and said, in her little brogue, "If you plase, I call on oo for a song, now."

"What song, my love?"

"The song you know yourself about 'Old times,' you know."

Lilly had as lief for certain reasons, that her young friend had spoken of some other song —but seating herself immediately at the harpsichord, she complied with great sweetness. We happen to have a copy of the stanzas in our possession:—

I.

Old times! old times! the gay old times—
When I was young and free,
And heard the merry Easter chimes
Under the sally tree.
My Sunday palm beside me placed—
My cross upon my hand—
A heart at rest within my breast,
And sunshine on the land!
Old times! Old times!

II.

It is not that my fortunes flee,
Nor that my cheek is pale—
I mourn whene'er I think of thee,
My darling native vale!—
A wiser head I have, I know,
Than when I loitered there—
But in my wisdom there is woe,
And in my knowledge, care.
Old times! Old times!

III.

I've lived to know my share of joy,
To feel my share of pain—
To learn that friendship's self can cloy,
To love, and love in vain—
To feel a pang and wear a smile,
To tire of other climes—
To like my own unhappy isle,
And sing the gay old times!
Old times! Old times!

IV.

And sure the land is nothing changed,
The birds are singing still:
The flowers are springing where we ranged,
There 's sunshine on the hill!
The sally, waving o'er my head,
Still sweetly shades my frame—
But ah, those happy days are fled,
And I am not the same!
Old times! Old times!

V.

Oh, come again, ye merry times!
Sweet, sunny, fresh, and calm—
And let me hear those Easter chimes,
And wear my Sunday palm.
If I could cry away mine eyes
My tears would flow in vain—
If I could waste my heart in sighs,
They'll never come again!
Old times! Old times!

"Very well! Sweetly sung indeed, Lilly," said Mrs. Hassett—"but I think you used to sing it with more spirit long ago. The last time I heard you I believe was when—"

"O, no matter when, Ma'am," said Lilly, laughing off the frightful reminiscence, that the worthy old lady was about to blunder upon in her honest, plain way—"but I must use my privilege." And wishing to stop the good woman's tongue in one way, by employing it another, a stratagem which she was the more induced to adopt, as she knew that the very shortest of Mrs. Hassett's songs would con-

sume a considerable portion of the evening, she flung her mantle in turn to that lady.

Mrs. Hassett's little melody completely disinclined the company from any farther amusement in the vocal way, the more especially as the night had fallen, in the meanwhile, and the darkness was so great by the time she had wound up the history of "The lady of skin and bone," that the company could no longer discern each other's faces.

"Lilly, my love, I think it would be almost time to get the candles," said Mrs. Byrne.

"How suddenly the night fell!" said Mrs. Hassett. "It looks as if we were to have a storm, and I brought nothing but my pattens and cloak."

"Oh, we can manage that very well," said Mrs. Byrne. "Well, Lilly, what about the candles?"

"I told James to get them ready an hour since, mother."

"Ring the bell for him, my dear."

Lilly did so.

"I don't know what keeps our Uncle Cuthbert so late," said Mrs. Byrne; "he was to have been here before now. We had all such laughing at him the other morning, about a bargain that he made, with whom, guess?"

"Oh, indeed, I heard of it—Maney Mac O'Neil, the gold-finder. That was a pretty business."

"He went off with two of the sub-sheriff's men this morning to look for the fellow. Eh? Heaven preserve us! Was not that lightning?"

"Oh, no—it was but the flashing of the candle-light from the hall upon the tea-things."

"But there's no candle-light in the hall, mother," said Lilly, "or 'twould be here before now. I wonder why James doesn't answer the bell."

"I'll be bound," said Mrs. Byrne, "he's gone out to look at the bonfires on the furze-

hill. Will you run down, and see what keeps him, Lilly? and take care now, not to hurt yourself with the bad step at the foot of the stairs, as you're in the dark."

Lilly left the room, closing the door behind her.

Immediately after, the distant muttering of the thunder placed Mrs. Byrne's conjecture out of the reach of all doubt. The conversation of the company became hushed and broken—and confined altogether to observations on the effect of the change.

The door again opened and shut.

"Well, Lilly, where are the candles?" said Mrs. Byrne, "Is James below?"

There was no answer. "Who was it came in?" said Mrs. Byrne. "Ah, come now, Lilly—no tricks, if you please. This is no time for joking. Why don't you answer, girl?"

The handle of the door again turned—and again it was shut fast.

"Bless me!" exclaimed one of the young

ladies, starting from her chair, and clasping Mrs. Hassett's shoulder.

"What's the matter, you foolish child?"

"Oh, Ma'am," the girl replied, panting with fear, "I—I don't know—but something brushed close by me."

"Poh!—nonsense!" said Mrs. Byrne, peevishly. "Well, Lilly, my lady," she added gaily, while her heart failed her, "I'll pay you for this. You're a pretty girl, to oblige me to leave my guests."

So saying, Mrs. Byrne left the room, the guests remaining hushed in an anxiety which their hostess's affected levity did not at all tend to alleviate.

In a few minutes, Mrs. Byrne re-entered with a light—her countenance being moved with an expression between vexation and real terror.

"I beg your pardon," she said hurriedly, "but I see this girl is determined to play the fool to-night. She has hid herself somewhere

or other," she added, forcing herself to believe what her heart and her knowledge of Lilly's character ought to have prevented her admitting for an instant.

They all proceeded to search the house. The hall door was found open—the wind and rain driving in, and wetting the large arm chairs that were placed beneath the hat-racks.—But Lilly was no where to be seen.

The silence, the suddenness of this disappearance, had something supernatural in it. It was a long time before the wretched mother would admit the reality of her misfortune; but when, at last, it burst upon her mind so forcibly as to break down all the opposition which her fears had raised against the conviction, the scene which Drumscanlon presented was such as no one, who had witnessed the quiet, social enjoyment of the family party an hour before, could possibly have anticipated—the guests hurrying to and fro, or standing still and star-

ing on one another in silent astonishment, while the poor distracted hostess, forgetting all the ceremonies of her station, hastened from room to room, mingling her heavy screams of terror with the pealing of the thunder, and clasping her hands, with the action expressive of deep affliction which is so peculiar to her country.

CHAPTER XIV.

"O smitē softē, sirē mine," quod she.—Chaucer.

The reader, however, can learn but little of the causes of this change by remaining to witness the affliction of the good old lady. We shall, therefore, once more, venture to pinion the wings of old Time, while we relate an incident that may assist in explaining them.

Mrs. Byrne evinced nothing more than an acquaintance with the character of her servant, James Mihil, when she supposed that he had been seduced into a neglect of his domestic

duties on this evening, by a curiosity to witness and participate in the festivities of the Eha-na-Shaun. Having, as he imagined, completed all the offices which fell to his share, on the occasion, seen the party fairly established at tea—the griddle laid aside to cool—the turf-basket outside the parlour-door, replenished with good hard sods, broken small so as to take the fire kindly—the silver-plated candlesticks nicely polished, and set in order on the kitchen-table—so that if any unforeseen misfortune should detain him, Miss Lilly should have nothing more to do than to light them with the twisted touch-paper he placed near them—having taken all these precautions, and moreover, unlooped from the wall above his own settle-bed a small bottle of last Easter-Sunday's holy water, which he preserved with an economical reverence, sprinkled his forehead with the consecrated liquid, and left the house, not without keeping a wary eye about him as he proceeded, lest some evil disposed

spirit of the night should take him at an advantage.

Within a few hundred yards of the house, lay a large field, which was allotted to a few *collop* of cattle, as grazing ground, its extent being greatly disproportionate to the quantity of its herbage; a circumstance which was in some measure accounted for by the number of furze bushes which were scattered over it. The night was already dark, before James descended the rude earthen stile which led into the field—and the brilliancy of this little district in itself, made the gloom of the surrounding heavens still more dense and impenetrable. The bushes had been set on fire, at various corners of the field, and were now crackling and blazing away with great fury. The herdsman of the farm and some of his retainers, with lighted faggots in their hands, were chasing the cows back and forward, making them sometimes leap in their desperation, over the flames, and burning the hair on their sides with

their faggots—a practice which is supposed to avert the curse of barrenness in the herd. After exchanging a salutation and a few ready jokes with the men, James proceeded slowly, his hands behind his back and a broad grin of admiration on his features, towards the central bonfire of the field.

While he stood gazing on the blackening trunk and boughs of the burning shrub, the flame, as it were, hollowing out a dwelling for itself in the centre, while it left the green and blossomy texture overhead yet uninjured, his attention was attracted by the approach of two strange men, who seemed as if they had been exhausted by a long and rapid journey on foot. One of them was a tall, awkwardly built fellow, to whom James did not pay any particular attention; but on the other—a low, thin-faced lad, with the patched and corduroy trowsers turned up on his bare legs, he could not avoid fixing his eyes, with a certain misgiving that he had seen the face under suspicious circumstances,

somewhere or another, before. The usual greeting having passed between both parties—

"A smart evenen, Sir," said the lesser of the two.

James accorded an assent.

"We made so bold, Sir," he continued, very respectfully, "to step out of the high road—a bad night comen on—an to ask lave, Sir, to stand here, Sir, be the fire, to take a hait o' de blaze agen the road, Sir."

"You're kindly welcome," said James, "without *sir*ring the likes o' me at all so much about it."

"Thanky, Sir, Mac!"

"Aih?"

"Where's de dram-bottle? De jontleman 'll give uz de liberty o' de fire a while."

"Here's the bottle. Will you take a taste?"

"Why den dat I will so, you may take your bible oat of it. But stay, aisy a minit," [uncorking the flask, wiping the jole with the sleeve of his coat, and handing it most politely

towards James, who continued eyeing him with great suspicion]—"may be you'd like to try what's inside of it, Sir?"

"No, no, we're obleest to you!" said James, waving him off, with a degree of sullenness which he thought the freedom warranted.

The refusal did not appear to break the heart any more than it lessened the spirits of the stranger, who immediately took upon himself the task which James had declined, and performed it with evident satisfaction.

"I don't blame any man for liken his own best," said he fixing his eye with a knowing leer upon James's bottle.

"O then indeed you're out there, for all!" returned James, "I wasn't so fond o' meself, that way. Its only a drop o' somethen I brought wit me, in case any thin bad would be there before me."

"Poh! sure 'tisn't to night dey have any power at all, only Holland-tide, and the Inhiad-law-onthina?"

"O iss, beggen your pardon, and to-night also"—said James, who piqued himself on being a kind of authority in all superstitious matters—"as I," he added with a mysterious nod, and compression of the lips and eyebrows, "have good reason to know. To-night isn't so bad as Holland-tide for 'em, but still they do be there for all."

"I wonder who dey are dat do be dere at all."

"Vaarious sorts, they say. The *dhina mauha*, or good people, that is, the fallen angels* that was a'most lost, formerly, and must remain, that way, Heaven save the mark, 'till the day o' judgmint, and more o' them the souls o' those that arn't bad enough for the great purgatory, and must be doen pinince that way upon the earth—wanderen over and hether, some without air a head on 'em, and more this way an that, until their

* This superstition corresponds singularly enough with that of the Peries in Oriental nations.

time is expired—and others of 'em that arn't buried in consecrated ground, and more that has debts upon their souls, an things that way."

"I wonder now," said the little stranger, "would purgatory be as hot as that fire?"

"It's not a point o' faith with uz Catholics, to say what sort purgatory is, whether 'tis hot or cold—or what is the nature o' the punishment that's there—but it's great, surely. I hear of a man that was lying once upon his sick bed, praying, and an angel coom an axed him would he rather have seven years' sickness o' that nature, or three minutes in purgatory. 'The three minutes then, to be sure,' says he. Well and good! he wasn't one minit o' that in purgatory whin he cried out, 'O murther,' says he, 'I was only to be left three minits, an here I am three hundred years already!'—See what that is!—"

"See what it is, why!" replied the other, who had sidled closer up to the speaker, and

before James had power to enforce the moral of his anecdote, he found himself on the flat of his back—a great bundle of hay stuffed into his mouth, so as nearly to smother him, while the foolish-looking fellow whipt out of his pocket the key of the hall-door. He could neither stir nor groan.

"Drag him o' one side out of the light," said the latter—"the boys are laving the field. Let us get into the dark until they pass. Cry out, Sir, if you like. Pigs *may* whistle, but they have very ugly mouths for it."

They moved on, and James had the cruel mortification to see the herdsman and his companions saunter slowly along within fifty yards of them, towards their own homes—making some observations on the change which was just beginning to take place in the night. They loitered an instant about the fire, where James and his now unwelcome visitors had been standing—held out their hands as a hissing sound in the circle of

flame led them to suppose that the rain had already commenced—and then walked off and disappeared in the darkness, to seek a remedy in the luxury of slumber, for the weariness of the evening's pastime. James felt his heart die away within him, as their voices grew faint in the distance, for, always disposed to overrate any peril in which he happened to be placed, he thought he had no further chance of deliverance from the blood-hounds into whose hands he had fallen.

"Here is the key, Awney," said the taller of the men—"now where are you to meet Suil Dhuv?"

"Here, dis way—near to the path, down the field—so that the horses won't miss us. Drag this gomeril after us."

While they were hauling the poor unresisting James along the ground, in that fashion which Teague, in the *Committee,* calls an Irish sedan, the thunder-storm commenced in good earnest—and the sound of horses' hoofs ring-

ing against the hard field, was heard plainly, at a distance which rapidly diminished.

"Here dey come!" said Awney; "he told me to be before him an try a trick o' dis kind. Little he tought we'd have it doon so aisy."

At the same instant the four horsemen whom they expected, came on at full speed, and bolted upon the footmen at so perilous a proximity before they reined up, that the foremost animal sunk his hoof deep into the soil within an inch of the head of the prostrate domestic, who was unable, even by a groan, to make them aware of his danger.

"Who's there? Maney? Farrell? Well? what have you done?"

"Whist? Coom down o' your horse, and see!"

Suil Dhuv dismounted.

"Ay, well done! Awney," said he, when the latter had put him in possession of the whole of their proceedings—"Now, let me

see! My lads, which of you knows Drumscanlon house?"

"I remember every twist and turn of it," said Awney, "since I gev de letter dat night to this neat'rel on de ground." James groaned in heart at the recollection.

"Very well, Awney—since I have got the key, I will require little assistance. So do you, lads, ride hard and fast over the commons, to the Corig-on-dhiol, for fear we miss the other prize. They must have foundered by this time."

Mun Maher and his two companions rode off, seemingly well contented.

"Maney," continued the Coiner, "take the reins of my horse, and stand close to your prisoner. And now, Awney, the key, and follow me! If any thing should happen, Maney, you know our signal."

They went off together towards the house, leaving James in a state of mind which may possibly be guessed at, when we say that the

very gentlest idea he had of their intentions was, that they were about to set fire to the dwelling, and rob and murder every individual they found under its roof.

A quarter of an hour elapsed, during which James suffered a degree of the torture of the poor man, the story of whose fortunes had betrayed him into a forgetfulness of his own personal safety, and whom, for his innocent agency in his misfortune, James was once or twice inclined, notwithstanding his Catholic principles, to wish in a worse place. His agony of suspense, however, was only changed for that of despair, when he beheld Suil Dhuv returning in haste with the form of a female in mourning, which he was not very long in recognizing, hanging on his shoulder, stretching her hands back in silence towards the house, and struggling violently, but very vainly. When they came near, he perceived the occasion of her silence. A heavy cotton handkerchief was tied over her mouth.

"Loose the gag, now, Awney," exclaimed Suil Dhuv—"nobody will hear her squalls now. Stay, I'll do it myself." And setting down his wretched prey, he slipped the knot of the kerchief, as the turgid and blackening face and staring eyes of the prisoner advertised him of the necessity of using some expedition. The instant the obstruction was removed, a shriek, as wild and piercing as female terror ever uttered, burst from the disfranchised throat—and died away in the horrid gurglings of suffocation, as the ruffian, startled by the sound, griped the poor girl's throat hard, cursed, swore at her, and even had the brutality to clench his rough fist, and raise it as if to strike her on the face.

"Come, gi' me the horse here, Maney —Be silent, I warn you, if you value your life!"

"I do *not* value it, ruffian!" she exclaimed, renewing her cries for assistance—"I will not stir! Stand back, coward and villain that

you are! O have I no friend in hearing? Am I quite deserted? O Heaven, hear me!"

"Here, put this loody about you, Miss, and be quiet, that's what you'll do," said Suil Dhuv, attempting again to force her on the horse, while the animal becoming restive at the fearful sounds with which his ears were assailed, increased his difficulty and his impatience.

"Lilly Byrne!" exclaimed the exasperated Coiner, "do you remember the note that warned you from the sally grove. It is the same friend that wishes to save you now."

"I want no friendship like this. If danger threatens me, let me meet it by my mother's side. If I am to die, let me perish under my own roof. I will not stir from this! I will not go with you!"

"You shall, by ——!"

"I will not stir! Help, Heaven! O Heaven, do not forsake me now! O my Lord, whom I have served, must this happen while your

lightnings are about us? O hear me, my last and first friend! Do not forsake me; strike the ruffian—or strike *me* from his horrid grasp —Ha! help—I am heard—They are coming—help—help!"

Heaven did hear her. A horseman dashing furiously toward them through the heavy rain, intercepted the flight of the Coiner. It was Robert Kumba. He sprung from his horse, and called in a hoarse voice on his enemy to stand. Lilly, recognizing him, with a cry of joy, ran towards him with outstretched arms.

A bullet from the holster pistol of the Suil Dhuv was swifter in its course than she. The space was empty where she should have found her lover, and before she could distinctly comprehend the accident which had occurred, the arm of the ruffian had again encircled her waist.

Again she renewed her cries of fear and agony, and again they were heard and answered. The thick and husky voice of a man

was heard at the upper end of the field, fulminating a volume of threats at some person who obstructed his passage, and who, by the fierceness and loudness of her shrieks and entreaties, shewed that Lilly Byrne was not the only female sufferer in the affray. At the same instant James succeeded in liberating himself from the trammels in which Maney had bound him. He started to his feet—threw his arms out from his shoulders as if to assure himself of his recovered freedom, then, by way of an introductory feat to the exploits which he meditated, he clenched his fist, capered into the air with a "Hoop! whishk!" and descending with the whole weight of his person upon the gaping and astonished gold-finder, bestowed him a blow on the temple that speedily rendered him indifferent to the whole affair.

While he paused, a little awe-struck by the elevated pistol of the Suil Dhuv, the strugglers in the dark approached more near. The

Coiner grew pale and red by turns as he recognized the voices.

"The very graves will give up their dead to save you after this," he exclaimed—"I believe you're charmed—No matter—It was well I took care of the pistols and ammunition. Up! in spite of———"

"Drag—tear her from me!" roared the Palatine, calling to James, who was hurrying towards them—"she would abet the murder! —Let free my arms! Look! He is on horseback—he's gone! escaped!"

"Do not go!—O mercy!—Husband! fly! —Have mercy on me! I will not quit him, ruffian!" The woman continued, struggling wildly, as James tore her from the old man and hurried her away to a distance from the place—"O my good man, Heaven will bless you, and let me go, and separate them! They are my husband and my father! Heaven bless you and do! Heaven bless you and —— You villain! let me go! They will murder each

other!—Father! My father! Have mercy on me, father! Run! run for your life, Denny, honey, run!"

Before the first sentence of this speech was uttered, the two enemies had confronted each other in silence. A pale, grim smile, which shewed more ghastly in the reddish light of the now subsiding fires and the momentary flashes of the lightning, shewed the deadly satisfaction which the old man felt in the encounter. The hatred of his antagonist was not less apparent, but there was a degree of quivering insecurity about the muscles of his face, which signified that the encounter perplexed at least as much as it gratified him.

"I thank Heaven, Macnamara—we are met at last," said the old man. "Give up that lady —and come with me——quietly."

Suil Dhuv elevated his pistol, sheltering the lock cautiously with his hand, but having only one shot remaining, he felt that it would be more prudent to husband it. "I do not want

your life," said he, "stand o' one side, and let me pass."

"I warn you to stand back," said the old man. "In the name of the King, whose laws you have broken—I arrest you for a prisoner."

"You had better not mind it," said his enemy.

"Villain," continued the Palatine, "your hour is come.—I took you into my house and into the bosom of my family, when the whole world besides had cast you off, and the gratitude you shewed me was to render my condition as desolate as your own. I have hunted you out to bring your deeds home to your door—and the Almighty has delivered you into my hands at length."

"Yes," replied the ruffian, warmly—"you took me into your house, to thrust me out again more destitute than ever. You threw temptations in my way that man could not resist, and beggared me for yielding to them. When I left your house, I had done you no injury—your benefits I had paid for with my

labour—I sought to do you none—I lived an easy life with my brother, and might be living with him still, if you and yours had not risen up against us to divide and persecute us. Ye murdered him among ye—and ye left me without a remaining friend in the world. Take the fruits of your labour!—You ruined me—I hated you—and I hate you still—but I am satisfied with the revenge I had—I tell you again I do not want your blood. You have but a little to spare, and if you'd keep that little, you'll stand aside and let me go my ways."

"Daring and hardened wretch," exclaimed the Palatine—"you may well say that you have been satisfied. If blood was wanted to content you, you have had enough."

"Come — come," said Macnamara, impatiently—"I don't understand you, but I have no time to bid you explain your meaning."

"Advance at your peril!"

"What rasin have you to me, Mr. Segur? I tell you 'tis better for you let me go."

"No reason, certainly," exclaimed the old man—"give me back the old blind man you murdered first—and then give me my daughter —and you may go your ways in peace."

"O—poh! how do you know I had any call to the dark man—and as for Sally—sure there she's westwards in the fields; take her—and welcome—Keep out o' my way now, I'd advise you. Ha! ha!—O if you think it's *that* I mind!" checking his horse, as the Palatine presented a pistol, and gathering the now insensible Lilly closer to him, as he prepared to set his foot in the stirrup.

"Poor, duped—deceived wretch!" cried the Palatine—"once more I bid you stand—Advance, and you are a dead man!"

"Poh—fire and —— "

The oath was never finished. The old man discharged his weapon, and darted forward to prevent a return of the fire. The horse at the same instant reared back on its haunches so as to entangle the foot of the rider in the

stirrup, and then plunging furiously forward, dragged him along the ground until both were out of sight. The young lady was snatched from beneath the very feet of the terrified animal, as they were about to descend upon her, by James; while the Palatine and the remainder of his party, who only now rode up, hastened in the track of the flying animal, with lighted faggots in their hands. They found the wretched man lying on his back on a heap of stones (some of which were smeared with blood and battered flesh), gasping in the agonies of death. He waved his hands and outstretched fingers before his face as the dazzling red light of the crowded torches flashed upon his eye-balls.—A frightful convulsion, first of terror, and then of hate, passed over his countenance as the Palatine passed through the strong light and gazed down upon him, after which the working of his jaws grew more painfully stiff and difficult—his person writhed in agony—a shivering passed through his limbs—the death-

foam oozed over his teeth and lips—the spirit, that seemed to cling with a desperate consciousness to its clay, as its last hold, was forced abroad upon the ruin it had earned for itself—and the book of its mortal crimes and sufferings was closed and sealed for the judgment.

CHAPTER XV.

"Where is the life that late I led?"

The silence, which the fearful death of the murderer had imposed on the party who accompanied the Palatine, was unbroken for many seconds. They gazed on the shattered body and on one another, as if the extreme horror of the occasion had left them unable to form an unassisted conjecture on the course which should be pursued. The old man was the first who spoke.

"My part in this deed," he said, handing the discharged pistol to Mr. Cuthbert, who had just then ridden up, "may be called in question. I am your prisoner, and ready to

answer for what I have done. Cover him! cover him! in mercy," he added, as one of the men stooped down apparently with the intention of removing the body—then flinging his own great-coat over it, while he averted his eyes in strong dislike and compassion blended —a feeling, which the pitiable appearance of the unhappy wretch, who had, but a few moments before, stood erect in the daring and dreadful defiance of desperate guilt, could not but excite even in the bosom of those whom he had most deeply injured.—"I never, before this hour," the old man continued, "drew one drop of blood, knowingly, from the smallest creature the Almighty ever endowed with life—and I like not the look of this well enough, to believe that I can be tempted to a second trial. If my human passion," he added, uncovering his head in the rain, and looking upward, "has had a part in the action which I have done—may He forgive and pity me."

"Why should you be uneasy?" said Mr. Cuthbert, "there was no other course left, and you only made justice certain."

The old Palatine shook his head, and replaced his hat upon his brow, while the remainder of the spectators raised the body for the purpose of removing it to the house of the nearest cottager.

Slowly, and in silence, they took their way toward Drumscanlon. They could perceive, by the rapid manner in which the lights passed from window to window, that the confusion, occasioned by the occurrences of the last hour, had not yet subsided. The flagged floor of the hall was wet with the dripping of hats and great-coats, and two or three of the guests, heedless of the pelting rain which still descended, were engaged in whispering consultation on the gravel plot outside. As they passed the kitchen door, the voice of James Mihil, who, in the attitude of a Demosthenes, was employed with all his might in haranguing

one of the Coiner's accomplices, the only one whom they had succeeded in apprehending.

"Indeed you never 'll pass the next assizes, so you may make your mind aisy. Indeed, the hangman 'll make his perquiges* o' you, so he will."

"Don't be botheren me, I tell you again, you fool."

"Botheren you, indeed! I wondther is it I or the hangman that 'll bother you most, you daaren villyan, to lay hands on the young missiz. An that inthricket little sprissawñeen† that put the gag upon my mouth, what luck we had not to lay hold of him!—Fool, iñagh? I wondther is it yourself or meself 'll look most like a fool, when I 'm readen your last speech on a bit o' whitey-brown paper, in the Irish-town, an you cutten capers above on Gallows-green, with a hempen cravat about your neck, as proud as a paycock, spaken to nobody."

"I wisht," said the prisoner, "I did my

* Perquisites. † Small fellow.

mother's bidden this evenen. I wouldn't be where I am now. He's a fool that refuses the mercy of Heaven when it is offered him—but it's too late to speak about it, now."

Mr. Cuthbert here broke in upon the dialogue to inquire after the wounded Kumba and Miss Byrne, who were both attended in separate apartments—and neither of whom had yet fully recovered from the insensibility into which their sufferings had cast them.—During the few weeks that were suffered to pass away, before the former was sufficiently restored to bear a removal to his own house, no communication more direct than an inquiry at second hand, passed between the friends —and Kumba left the home of his mistress, without even the ceremony of a formal parting.

This heroic forbearance was prolonged for many years, during which, the character of the young "middle-man" appeared to have undergone a perfect change—a change which

communicated itself to his circumstances, and to the property which he held. The dwelling-house gradually put on a more civilized appearance, the stones which covered the grazing land were removed and appropriated to the more advantageous use of fences and boundaries. The cattle began to look more sleek and comely, better pleased with themselves and with the world around them. The barn and granary groaned beneath their burthens, the stroke of the flail was heard incessantly throughout the autumn, and the grating of cart-wheels over the well-gravelled avenue, scarce ever left the ear at rest throughout the day. Notwithstanding all the hints that were dropped in his hearing, of the satisfaction which these improvements had given in a certain quarter, Kumba was careful to abstain from any thing that could indicate a premature anxiety to revive the memory of departed hours, and he even chose, on Sundays, to attend a chapel which was near three miles from

his residence, rather than hazard a renewal of the distractions, which his presence at the parish place of worship had, in old times, so frequently occasioned to another as well as to himself.

Lilly, whose pure and gentle heart would have been content to find its sole worldly enjoyment in hearing of the happiness of one whom she loved with so disinterested an affection, was more pleased than grieved at this privation, and felt herself repaid for all her self-denial by the accounts which daily reached her (under the form of sly jokes and hints from witty visitors) of Kumba's welfare—and by an occasional exclamation from James, thrown out in an accidental way, of "what a fine man Master Robert was riden into a fair in a mornen!"

Alas, for human nature! alas, for friendship! alas, for all that is sincere, and honest, and benevolent!—it would be, we fear, a mournful and humiliating task for the philan-

thropist to analyze the motives even of the most seeming amiable actions that pass around him, and discover how few are affectionate, how few are generous, how few are compassionate, how few are humble, even of those who act the parts, and imagine themselves to be what they appear. Our best friends, says a modern aphorist,* have a jealousy even in their friendship, and if they hear us praised, will ascribe the commendation, if they can, to some interested motive. We appeal to the reader, whether he has not frequently found through life, that the most disagreeable intelligence has often reached him through the medium of his kindest and most sympathizing acquaintance—and whether in the fulness of an extatic heart, when he sought that same kind friend, for the purpose of communicating to him a piece of sudden good fortune which he had experienced, he has not often been met by some chilling doubt, some friendly,

* The author of Lacon.

cautious hint, which has humbled his vain heart, and

> " —though that his joy *were* joy,
> Yet threw such changes of vexation on it,
> As it might lose some colour—"

and shewed him at the same time that the friends whose sorrow went before his own in the hours of despondency and disappointment, yet lingered far behind him in the sympathy of gratulation. We shall not stop to calculate the number of those whose generosity might safely undergo a test so severe and, perhaps, so uncharitable.

Neither shall we examine whether the worthy Mrs. Hasset was one of the many whose benevolence passes current and unsuspected even by themselves; or whether she were influenced by any other impulse than that which she herself believed to be the sole motive of her conduct—a feeling of unalloyed good-nature and neighbourly kindness—when, arming herself against the inclemency of a

misling April morn, in cloak, pattens, and hood, she took her early way to Drumscanlon, to communicate and condole with the old lady and her daughter on what she conceived to be a very heart-rending piece of news.

"A moist, soft mornen, it is, Ma'am," exclaimed a voice that was familiar to her, as she slipped off her pattens on the steps of the hall door. "Herself is in the kitchen garden, westwards, walken with Miss Lilly—but I'll run an call her to you, Ma'am."

"Do so, James. How is she?"

"Ah, then, only poorly," James replied, leaning on the end of the hoe with which he had been clearing away the grass tufts from the gravel plot, and tossing his head with a mournful significance. "The deafness is growing worse with her—an she can't knit, nor do a hai'porth, the eye-sight is so bad. They got a sort of a little pochay for her, a thing like a chair for all the world, only wheels—with wheels to it—so as that I draw

her about a piece every mornen—but I fear it's all no use. They got new spectacles too, in place o' the eyes—but when our legs, an our ears, an our eyes are going from us in coorse o' nature, the art o' man wouldn't make us new ones."

Having pronounced this profound apostrophe, James hurried towards the garden, while Mrs. Hasset adjourned to the parlour, where she occupied herself, until James's return, in regulating the furniture, whisking the dust from the chimney ornaments, and lecturing the housemaid for her negligence.

The lady of the mansion was, in the meantime, seated with her daughter in a small thatched summer-house in the garden. Age and sorrow had laid a heavy and visible hand upon her frame; and it was with some difficulty that even Lilly Byrne could at all times succeed in awakening her attention so as to arouse her from the lethargic state into

which the wasting of nature's resources had reduced her.

"Come, now, you must walk, mother," said Lilly, passing her arm beneath that of the drooping lady, and lifting her from the rustic seat—"the rain is over—and the sunshine will do you good. Only as far as the sun-dial and back again—"

They proceeded along the walk—the old lady leaning on her daughter, and supporting herself on the other side with the gold-headed oak stick, which had for many years been the companion of her husband's walks. The change which had taken place in the person of her daughter was also considerable. Her shape, though less pliant and sylph-like, had more of the majesty of womanhood about it—her step was firmer and more easy—and her features, less delicate of tint than in her early days, were covered with a peaceful serenity that told of conquered sorrow, and the unruffled calmness of a resigned spirit—like a

battle field over which returning peace had thrown her mantle of rustic quiet and abundance, without concealing the graves of buried hopes, and vanquished passions, that gave a sombre interest and solemnity to its loveliness.

"What was it the visitors said yesterday," Mrs. Byrne inquired, in a faint tone, "that made you all laugh, Lilly? You have not told me that yet, though I asked you three times."

Lilly looked confused and hesitated, and her mother, by a feeble, melancholy smile, shewed that she understood the cause of her embarrassment.

"I'll not ask you, Lilly," she continued, speaking with difficulty. "I understand he is greatly changed. I wish I could see you happy with him, Lilly, before I died."

Before her daughter could reply, James had entered the garden. The talent of this domes- did not not lie in a very perfect discrimination, and it was a fault which involved him in many

a gentle *fracas* with his "young mistress," that he could at no time govern his voice to the proper tone while addressing Mrs. Byrne. He knew she was deaf, and, once convinced of the necessity of speaking loud, and being wholly unacquainted with the effect of his own voice above a certain familiar key, his gentlest communications frequently operated on the nerves of the old lady with the influence of a galvanic shock. At the present moment, while she was looking with some faint slyness of eye on the changing countenance of her daughter, he approached her, unperceived by either, and, placing his lips close to her ear, thundered into it, "Misthris Hassit, Ma'am, that 's wanten you, av you plase."

Both ladies turned suddenly, and beheld James standing with his usual earnest gaze fixed upon them.

"I often spoke to you about that, James,' said Lilly—"One would think you took a

pleasure in startling my mother. Tell Mrs. Hasset, your mistress will feel obliged by her walking into the garden for a few minutes.

"I will, Miss. Take a pleasure!—Ah, fie! Miss Lilly, I didn't think you'd say that at all. I'm heart-broken with it for a story; what am I to do at all? If I speak small, I'm toult to speak up, an if I speak up, I get crossness. Well, I'm going, Miss—'twas unknownst I done it. To the garden, I'll tell her?" and away he strode, humming to himself the popular distich,

> "The finest divarsion that 's under the sun,
> Is to sit be the fire till the pzaties are done."

In a few minutes the ladies were joined by their good-natured visitor, who, after the usual ceremonies of greeting had passed, proceeded, with a face of deep condolence and satisfaction, strangely yet visibly blended, to unburden her heart of its freightage of bad tidings.

"You have not heard the news?" she said,

glancing at the eyes of both her auditors in turn.

"What news?"

"Well, I'm glad you have not yet heard it, for I was on thorns for fear some thoughtless person would have blundered upon it before you, without any preparation. You, I am sure, Lilly," she continued, "have too much good sense to let it take hold of your mind."

Lilly paused for a few seconds while she looked out upon the now serene and cloudless heavens, and then turning upon the communicative lady an eye as lightsome and as smiling as the blue expanse itself, she repeated her interrogatory.

"Robert Kumba," said Mrs. Hasset, dwelling on every word with the distinctness which the importance of the occasion warranted—"Robert Kumba is going to be married!"

"What is it Mrs. Hasset says, my dear?" said Mrs. Byrne to her daughter.

"She says that Mr. Kumba is going to be married, Ma'am," replied the latter, smiling, and adapting her voice more judiciously than James had done to the condition of the aged widow's auricular powers.

"Yes," Mrs. Hasset continued, a little annoyed by the perfect equanimity with which her distracting intelligence was received by the party she considered most interested—"I always suspected that it was not for nothing all those fine alterations were taking place about his farm. It was only yesterday evening I learned that he had proposed for Miss Jemima Blaney. She is a pretty girl, indeed, and has a nice ready-money fortune—but I know where Mr. Kumba might have made a better choice. However, that's past and gone, now. If not a better, at least a fairer and more honourable one—*that* I will say. But youth —money and youth are every thing with the men in these days—girls begin to be looked upon as old maids now, at an age when they

would be hardly suffered to go into company in my time."

The conversation was again interrupted by the entrance of James, who now approached them with a double proportion of importance and astonishment in his look and manner. Not forgetful of his former error, he now communicated his intelligence to Lilly, in a whisper which was not lost on the quick ear of Mrs. Hasset.

"Is it possible?" she exclaimed. "How sudden!"

"Not altogether so," said Lilly, endeavouring to command the agitation which made her frame tremble—"he wrote to my mother a few days since, and we appointed this morning to receive him."

"Well, I rejoice most sincerely at it, indeed —and I will not stay to encumber you with my presence—for I know how I felt on these occasions myself in my young days—when poor Hasset—ah!—well, good morning, Lilly,

I'll not detain you"—then turning back as if struck by a sudden thought—"it would be as well, perhaps, if you said nothing of that report, as it happens to be false—and it would only annoy the poor young man. Some malicious person that set it afloat, I dare say, to make us uneasy."

As the good lady left the garden, she was met by a gentleman in black, with a long skirted coat and slashed sleeves, a cravat neatly edged with the finest Flanders lace, a periwig of reasonable compass, surmounted by a small glossy hat, clocked silk stockings, and square-toed shoes, with neat small buckles —all, in fact, that could be esteemed characteristic of gravity and respectability united. He bowed to Mrs. Hasset as he passed, and entered the garden in some trepidation and anxiety.

"It is a bad sign to go a wooing in mourning," said the lady, shaking her wise head as she gazed after him. "I hope no harm will come of it."

The stranger, in the mean time, passed from the garden to the summer-house, in which Lilly Byrne and her mother were expecting him. Even his manly heart began to fail him when he caught the first glimpse of their mourning drapery through the scanty foliage of the spring boughs. The sorrows of the past—the afflictions which his own wantonness had occasioned, rushed back upon his memory in a dark and overpowering torrent, and unnerved his resolution. Some slight motion in the arbour, however, recalled him, presently, to a sense of the necessity of self-possession; and quickly arousing himself from his depression he walked forward, without risking the return of his evil recollections by a second pause.

It was an embarrassing meeting to all parties—for the will must always remain in a state of embarrassment where the judgment and the affections are at war, and neither can indicate the extent to which the other ought

to be indulged. Nature, however, generally asserts her own right to dictate on such occasions.

Kumba, with his eyes cast down, had commenced a confused and hesitating speech about his "gratitude for the indulgence which—" when suddenly abandoning himself to his natural feelings, he flung himself with a burst of grief at the feet of the young lady, and exclaimed—"I cannot do it!—Oh, Lilly—Mrs. Byrne, say that you will forgive me!"

The tears of the penitent did not fall alone. Miss Byrne was compelled in her agitation to seek from her mother the support which it was her wont to afford to the old lady, while she exerted herself to recover some degree of calmness.

"Let us not distress my mother," she said at length—"our answer to your letter must have shewn you that our hatred was not inveterate. Ah, Robert," she continued with a smile—"we have both had cause enough to learn the

wisdom of forgetfulness. Here is my hand—Let us talk no more of the past—I am glad to see you."

In this position of affairs, we may be pardoned for suffering a veil to fall over the group, as we fear, with all his benevolence, the reader would feel little interest in following the parties through the peaceful and unruffled history of the fortunes of their latter days.

In less than a year after this occurrence, our little heroine, Lilly Byrne, was rewarded for her constancy and her endurance. Robert Kumba, was once more received as a welcome guest at Drumscanlon, and once more took his place at Lilly's work-table. Again Lilly resumed her stout flowered-silks, her cheeks recovered their bloom, and verified Mrs. Hasset's prediction that she would "forget all before she was twice married."

Mr. Cuthbert, unhappily, never recovered his money, but he had the satisfaction of lodging Maney in jail for the swindling, Mr.

Shine (though at the evident risk of his own reputation) undertaking to appear in corroboration—and also of rasing to the ground the hold of the gang, and telling the whole story (with no other variation than that he took care to make himself the hero of the night) once a year at Drumscanlon, when he came for Lilly Kumba's full-bounds *again* the fair of Cork.

"I declare, Miss——Ma'am, I mane, and I ax pardon for the mistake," said James, as he wished the bride joy after the ceremony had passed, "I declare I had soomthen inwardly, you see, that always told me this would be the way of it in the end——" and here he gazed at arm's length upon the gorgeous favour which enveloped his own hat.—"To be sure, I was greatly frightened that night—but, says I, taken heart, what hurt? Av they don't burn the house we'll get help in time, please Heaven; and I took care they shouldn't do that, for I made the thatcher put a big bit o' the *lusera-*

thocaun [house-leek] in the thatch, so that av they were setting fire to it from this until to-morrow morning 'twould never light, any more than the stone wall itself."

A short space may suffice to tell the fortunes of the remaining characters of our history. The unhappy father, disappointed in all the expectations with which he returned to his native land—and unwilling to live in the ruined cottage where every object reminded him of some perished friend or vanished happiness of his youth, returned with his widowed daughter to Germany, regretting from the very core of his heart, the thirst of gain which had induced him to commit to the uncertain keeping of a stranger the charge of his domestic affections —affections which he knew not, until they were thus blasted, to have been so necessary to his peace of mind.

His daughter followed him willingly. From the moment of her husband's death, she never once uttered a complaint, never once up-

braided her father with the part he had acted in the scene which we have just detailed, but seemed anxious by her resignation and her affectionate devotion to all his wishes, to blot away from his remembrance the record of her early disobedience and ingratitude.

In this she was very successful, and both lingered out the remainder of their days with as much quietude of spirit, as those who have nothing left on earth to wish or hope, can experience. They never spoke of home or past times—but their hearts had been too sorely smitten to permit them to seek refuge in the formation of new attachments from the memory of the old, and lost. Their life was lonely, therefore, though peaceful.

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